CURRENT ANECDOTES

A Preacher's Magazine of Illustrations, Homiletics, Sermons and Methods of Church Work.

Copyrighted 1904, by F. M. BARTON

Vol. V, No. 9. CLEVELAND, JUNE, 1904. Cut Gems, Vol. IX, No. 9.

MARK GUY PEARSE'S OBSERVATIONS.

From "CHRIST'S CURE FOR CARE."

Published by Jennings & Pye and Eaton & Mains.

WORRY. (571)

Psa. 37:7, 8; Prov. 24:19.

The moment I fret about a thing I am its slave, instead of its master. And there is no slave-master in the world like worry. Another master may grudge the dinner hour, but he must give you time for sleep. Another master may grudge the dinner hour, but sometime you must eat. But worry will work you twenty-four hours a day and spoil your appetite into the bargain. And if you sleep, what a burdened, broken sleep it is.

RICHES. (572)

1 Tim. 6:10; Prov. 10:22.

Do not let us abuse in words that which all of us would like to have if we could.

"Ah, my dear madam," said a minister one day to a friend of mine, "it is a dreadful thing to have one's heart set upon money."

"Yes," said she, "but it is a capital thing to have your hand on some."

That is precisely the difference. A good thing in the hand, is a horrible thing in the heart.

THE FATHER'S CARE. (573)

Psa. 145:9, 10; Matt. 6:26.

"Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Some time ago I was reading a book on "Geology," by Professor Geikie. I came across a statement that filled me with wonder. "It is calculated that the river Rhine brings down annually lime enough to supply three hundred and thirty-three million oysters with shells."

It was during my holidays, and I was fishing off the coast of Guernsey. I read it to the boatmen with me, and it was the topic for a day's conversation. I saw in my mind the Alps rise mighty and majestic holding communion with the stars. And yet from these must come the lime for oyster shells.

I saw the sun in the heavens lighting up the worlds, so far away, with its exhaustless energies of light and heat. And yet the sun was lifting up the vapors into the heights where they became snow; and the snow in turn became the glacier that ground and ground the mountains into lime for oyster shells.

I saw ten thousand leaping, laughing waterfalls flinging themselves from the heights, bringing down the supply for the tiny creatures that waited in the North Sea. And then I saw the stately river Rhine flowing past cities and underneath the shadow of ancient castles, and it hastened on its way bearing the material in which the oysters were to find their shells.

My heart laughed within me with the glad faith—What a thing it is to be an oyster! And yet are we not much better than they? "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

Look back and see the marvelous provision that the Heavenly Father has made for every one of us. The angels surely shuddered the first time they saw a baby, and wondered that God dared make anything so awful in its helplessness.

No terror that ever came into a man's mind in thought of going out of this world would have compared with that terror of coming into it.

And lo! we came—and a mother's love bent over us. O, the marvelous and perfect ministry! Little—and yet because little so unutterably dear. Weak—yes, omnipotently weak. Waited upon day and night with a service unwearied, a service that found its heaven in its ministry. The power that made a mother is the power that I can trust forever and ever. A mother is the "Fear not" of nature to our hearts.

CARE. (574)

Don't you trouble trouble
Till trouble troubles you.
Don't you look for trouble;
Let trouble look for you.

Don't you borrow sorrow;
You'll surely have your share.
He who dreams of sorrow,
Will find that sorrow's there.

If care you've got to carry
Wait till 'tis at the door,
For he who runs to meet it
Takes up the load before.

Who feareth hath forsaken
The Heavenly Father's side;
What he hath undertaken
He surely will provide.

"Cheer up," the sparrow chirpeth,
"Thy Father feedeth me;
Think how much more he careth,
O, lonely child, for thee!"

"Fear not," the flowers whisper,
"Since thus he hath arrayed
The buttercup and daisy,
How canst thou be afraid?"

Then don't you trouble trouble,
Till trouble troubles you:
You'll only double trouble,
And trouble others too.

WINDOWS FOR SERMONS.

By A. J. Archibald, Digby, N. S.

WATCH. (575)

Mark 13:34-37; Rev. 3:2.

The ships swung at anchor in the roadstead with their mighty guns and men by the thousands ready to hurl a ton of steel and dynamite on any foe rash enough to come that way. But while the Russian foe lay there six little black Japanese boats crept up in the darkness, and sped away; leaving three ruined ships upon the shore.

Russia was ready for the whole fleet of Japan, not ready for the little wasps that came and stung her in the dark.

We are ready for the man who says steal, or be impure, or swear falsely. We scorn and pass him by; but our lives are often ruined by the little foes with great stings that come under cover of the darkness.

DETACHED. (576)

Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34.

Before the present war broke out there was a cable between the Japanese port of Nagasaki and the Russian port Vladivostock, over which passed messages and press reports. But when the blast of war sounded the cable was left on the bottom; but each end was detached from the instruments. The operators await the return of peace to use the idle wire lying there. So we ask, of what use is connection between man and God when there is no peace between? When enmity has the place of love? When our sin compels God to detach the cable from his instrument, and our lack of desire to meet him severs our own end of the connection? But the cable is there yet. Jesus, the Son of God, remains. Renew the circuit. O speak to the Intercessor and let him plead your cause!

SYMPATHY. (577)

Job 6:14; Heb. 13:3; 1 Pet. 3:8.

It was easier for the British soldier before Sebastopol to bear the surgeon's saw as it ate in through the bone and marrow when Florence Nightingale held his hand, and he knew that right there by him was one who felt for him. The great surgeon of the ages is ever busy, some poor wretches are ever on the table, we can look aside and forget them if we will, only they suffer the more alone.

SOLD (578)

Heb. 12:16; Mark 8:36.

Thomas Dixon, Jr., author of two clever stories dealing with the Negro and socialism, makes a woman who has just escaped death in a collision say to her lover, "As I lay there beneath the debris expecting the flames and death, I would have given up all hope of heaven for one hour with you." For one hour of joy and eternity! Yet that is human. Esaus are not dead. We take our eternities and lay them on the wheel of fortune as though they were brass coins. And the wheel stops! You have lost! Lost! Not till after do you realize what it has meant.

LOOK BEYOND. (579)

Mark 8:35; 2 John 8; Rom. 8:18.

Cecil Rhodes was dead! They laid his lifeless body far up amongst the kopjes of Rhodesia. They buried him there in the heart of the land that he had craved for Britain. No warrior he; but a mighty politician. A true lover of Britannia, he had conceived the magnificent idea of painting a strip in Africa from Capetown to Cairo in deep British red. He did not expect to see it in his day; that did not deter him. His eye was on the coming centuries, the glory of his country in his heart; and brain and treasure, and popularity he sacrificed. Friends, even, he laid upon the altar. But the future for his land in Africa must be great. In his day he did much; railways from the north and south are reaching out to shake hands on the equator beneath the folds of the Union Jack; but his conception of a British Africa has taken root in the heart of an Empire. He saw in his day and was glad. He looked into the future and was more glad. Fifty years from now British historians will write upon Africa with one letter at Capetown, another at Bloomfontein, a third at Pretoria, another at Victoria Nyanza, a fifth

at Kartoum and the sixth at Cairo, R-H-O-D-E-S. Rhodes was great because he looked beyond the moment and conceived the nations' task for centuries. That character is great that is built up with an eternity in view.

LURED DOWN. (580)

Gen. 25:34; Heb. 12:17.

The native of Peru has slain an animal for food. He leaves upon the skin some pieces of the raw flesh and goes with it far up the mountain side, upon the rugged Andes. He finds a crevice in the rock, lies down in it and covers himself with the skin with the raw side exposed to the heavens.

The giant condor, seated on the cliff or soaring far above the clouds scents the flesh. He drops upon the pelt and pulls the flesh off with his beak. But the native underneath seizes him by the feet and wrapping the skin around him, sells him at the nearest port, to decorate some city park a thousand miles away. God gave the condor pinions and speed to catch the fleeing prey upon the mountain peaks or above the clouds! But a native lays a bait and catches the bird and calls him fool. So easily caught by a scrap of meat! God gave every man a nature that thrives at its best above sin, above doubtful pleasure, above deceit; and when we come down to these things at the call of our fellows, they may pat us, but "fool, fool, so easily caught," they say within.

OUR DEBT. (589)

He loved the world of flowers and fields, did Walter Scott. He yearned for rolling hills and quiet dells. The horse and dog when hard upon the trail of deer were his delight. Every song of the bird, every scream of the eagle, every deep tone of the hound was a call; "Come out!" Come out and live! But what right had he to pleasure? He was in debt. It called him on to effort. A half a million dollar debt cried, "Work on!" He bent then to his task and turned out book on book as year by year that mighty pen flew on till they laid the king of prose in honored tomb. O, Scott! for this we honor thee! Loathed be the man who owes and does not try to pay! O, men, if we be true, if we be honest, if we be thoughtful with ourselves, we must hear that debt of ours calling in no uncertain tones, pay! pay! By honest, constant, willing service, pay!

SURRENDER TO A KING. (590)

You recall that scene in Ivanhoe where a great stone castle is attacked by a host of footmen, and with them only one armed knight. Within the castle are many defenders and six steel clad knights. But the one knight who attacks is worth them all. Clad in black steel he beats down the outer barriers and their defenders. He reaches the outer wall and pauses at the moat. Only for a moment. Across the moat he threw a plank and standing on it rains blow on blow upon the castle door and every blow he strikes shivers oak and iron cracks. The door gives way! The knight DeBracy meets him in the passage way. They close! But DeBracy soon goes down before those awful blows, and there the one above him cries, "Yield or die!" "To whom? I yield not to one unknown." The black knight kneels and whispers, "Richard, the king." DeBracy hands his sword with joy to him—'twere glory to surrender to a king. And Jesus the Christ cometh not to you with sword and spear to smite you low and so to have you for his man, but he stands and cries, "Come unto me, I'm the Christ, the King." Glory there is, where he, your Master, is.

THE PERMANENT. (591)

You go out into the night, in early winter, and as you glance upon the starry heavens all dotted here and there with sparkling gems, you may admire and pass by. But if you look with care you find those stars divided up in groups or constellations. The Bears in the North, the Pleiades set like a group of diamonds in the dome of blue; the Gemini, but larger, brighter, clearer than the rest stands forth Orion, champion of the skies. If you possess the imagination of the old astronomers you see him there with the skin of the lion held up before; with a tiny constellation for a head, two great stars for shoulder points, three stars for a belt, and away down there brighter still is his left foot. They call that star Rigel. But under a powerful lens that which looks like a single star proves to be no less than six stars very close together. There they are in a family group; and the earth rolls round and the seasons come and go, and the constellations sweep on through infinite space, and the signs of the Zodiac roll round once a year, but the left foot of Orion changes not. Those six stars dwell in unity. No separations, no decay; man changes but God's heavens stand sure. And beyond Orion with his foot of six is God and Christ and the host of the redeemed; they change not, no separation there, and leaving the body we want to soar away to be with them, and be God's Sons in the permanent state.

ATONEMENT. (592)

Electricians have a device for storing electricity known as the Leyden jar; whatever its form the principle is this: Two metallic plates and a sheet of glass between; one metallic plate is charged with electricity from a machine. Immediately that charged plate begins to act through the glass on the other metallic plate. It repulses the electricity of the same kind and draws toward it the opposite kind; and there, the glass between the two, they hold each other bound. They are drawn one toward the other with force. But the glass stands between, they cannot meet. The barrier is impassible. Now take away the glass, or form a connection around it and they rush together with a flash and becoming one in nature, disappear. Not otherwise was it between God and man. God wanted to come to man, to live in his heart; and man at his best moments wanted to come to God. But sin stood between. And God being holy could not go through, and man knowing him to be holy did not try to go to him through sin. And thus they stood, separated! At variance! Sin must be removed ere they can come together in that indefinable union of joy. The barrier was real, and so we see the need of an atonement.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM NATURE.

SERVICE OR BEAUTY. (593)

Matt. 6:28; Hos. 14:5.

You would not think it, but the corn belongs to the lily tribe. It is itself a lily, constructed upon the plan and pattern of a lily. It is of noble birth. It is kindred to the palm, which is the most royal plant at the head of the vegetable kingdom. It comes from a family that had two descendants, one that branched off to the one side, and became idle and aristocratic, and did nothing but clothe itself with more than the glory of Solomon; and the other branched off to the other side and became a worker and a servant, the hardest working of all the plants of the world, year after year setting the table and preparing the food of God's great household. In order to accomplish this ministry it wears no flowery crown, adorns itself in no gay garment, but lays robes aside, and girds itself with the homely girdle of straw, and puts on working clothes suited to its work.

TURNING TO GOD. (594)

Prov. 1:23; Acts 14:15.

Isn't it a very curious thing that the tendril of a climbing plant will not turn like a leaf to the light, but away from the light to the shadow. Why is this? Because the shadow tells it in some wonderful, mysterious way that some solid object round which it can twine is casting that shadow near at hand; whereas if it is all light around it, that shows that there is no solid object round which it can twine near at hand to intercept the light and cast a shadow. And therefore the tendril has learned by experience to turn always to the shadow for support. And so your trouble will reveal to you the presence of the Mighty One, whose shadow it is, and you can lean all your weakness on his Almighty strength. Let your whole life be a turning to God, who is all your salvation, and should be all your desire.

NATURE IS DEVOUT. (595)

Psa. 136:5-9; Job 37:5.

Nature teaches man the lesson of worship.

The aspect of Nature is devout. Like the figure of Jesus, she stands with bended head, and hands folded upon the breast. The happiest man is he who learns from Nature the lesson of worship.—R. W. Emerson.

To the undevout, Nature is simply a workshop; to the Christian, it is a voice; to the scientist who strives, waits, plods and pries, she grudgingly yields up rich knowledge of her wonderful construction and powers. To the saint she opens at once the inner chamber of her most hallowed mysteries and speaks of her Creator God. But when the saint is also a man of science, there are ten thousand tongues, mute to others, with which she whispers the goodness and greatness of the Almighty.—H. C. McCook, D. D.

Health and strength depend upon wise activities.

No air is sweet that is silent; it is only sweet when full of low currents of under-sound, triplets of birds, and murmur and chirp of insects, and deep-toned words of men, and wayward trebles of children.—John Ruskin.

COMMUNION WITH NATURE. (596)

Psa. 104:24; Prov. 3:19.

Mr. Lockyer, in a recent scientific paper, refers to a curious mistake made by an eminent artist in a picture of a garden with children playing in it. One of the children was blowing soap-bubbles from a pipe. Several of those bubbles were floating in the air, and all of them had on their filmy surface reflections of windows. Now, there were no windows in the garden to make such reflections. Instead of painting his bubbles from Nature, the artist had copied them from a scientific book in which there were colored photographs taken from bubbles blown in a laboratory lighted up with many windows, and therefore these windows were reflected upon their surface, and appeared in the photographs. But the artist transferred them to his garden scene, not realizing that they were out of keeping with the circumstances of the place. Do not too many act in the same way in regard to Nature? They transport to some beautiful scene which they visit the sordid cares and worldly thoughts which belong to their business life. Instead of exposing their thoughts and feelings freely to the light of heaven, to be illumined and colored by the purer suggestions of God's works around they bring to them the dark images of the world, the reflections of the selfish, material pursuits they have left for awhile behind. And such thoughts and feelings are out of harmony with their surroundings. They cannot help them to enter into communion with the great heart of Nature. They can comprehend the soul of nothing that they see. Nothing speaks to them of the higher world, of which the world around them is the veil and the shadow.

THE GIFT OF GOD. (597)

Psa. 65:9-13.

A story is told by Miss Frances Power Cobbe, of a French princess of the House of Orleans, visiting her uncle, the Duke of Lucca, one summer when the land was filled with flowers and every tree bright with foliage, and wreathed with the tendrils of the vine. She had never before been in Italy, and the wonderful beauty seemed to her like a dream of paradise. She fancied that the lovely landscape around her was thus decorated for her sake, and thanked her uncle with tears in her eyes for his wonderful welcome. But a poet standing by the side of the princess told her that the giver of the festival was the King of kings, and that his loving hand had made the land one bower of bloom not more for her than for the poorest peasant girl. And yet the feeling which the princess had was in a certain sense true. It was, indeed, for her that the beautiful festival of Nature was got up. God adorns his world for everyone who is capable of seeing and enjoying its beauty. Its glory is born anew in every heart that is con-

scious of it. He who can see all the splendor, and take in all the joy of the landscape, has the true possession of it—no matter to whom its acres belong. All the beauty, all the tender touches with which God has filled it are for him alone, a kind of confidential cipher-writing which he alone can interpret, in which God reveals to him the secrets of his wisdom and love.—Cyclopedia of Nature Teachings.

THE NEGLECTED TREASURES OF NATURE. (598)

Job 38:25-27; Acts 14:17.

Man is far from being the only object of Divine care.

Man is master. But there is a great deal in this world besides man. Nature takes a thousand darlings to her bosom. Every evening motherly darkness puts to bed myriads of unnamed children of the sod, of the leaf, of tree, bush, moss, and stone. Every morning she sends again to awaken her brood, and troops them forth to their dewy breakfast. "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." We sometimes get nearer to God in proportion as we get far from men. These neglected treasures of Nature are a book of Divine things, and if we do not read, the Creator does.—H. W. Beecher.

TREES AS SPIRITUAL OR MORAL SYMBOLS. (599)

Rev. 22:2.

The symbolic allusions to trees in the Bible surpass in number and significance those found in any ancient or modern books.

In Eden "out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food." The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was there also, and the tree of life in the midst of the garden. In the promised land the children of Israel were to plant all manner of trees for food. In their thanksgiving feast of seven years, celebrated in the seventh month, they were to take on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, the branches of palm trees, the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook for symbols of gratitude and joy.

In the inimitable drama of Job, when in deepest gloom his life seemed less than that of a tree. "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giving up the ghost, and where is he?" Again he said, "Mine hope hath he removed like a tree."

But the first Psalm declareth that the righteous "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither." And the trees of the wood are to rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh to judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

The paths of wisdom are paths of peace, for "she is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." "The fruit of the righteous is also a tree of life," and though hope deferred maketh the heart sick, "when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life."

John the Baptist makes a striking use of the tree: "And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the tree; every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Jesus uses the tree with wonderful appositeness of illustration and persuasiveness of allusion: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, "the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs;" it even rises above herbs, "and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Jude describes the gluttonous and licentious hypocrites bearing the name of Christ, as "trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." And in the Apocalypse the promise is given to those who overcome that they shall "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God;" the tree "which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." And as the awful but hopeful prophecy approaches its end a voice was heard in heaven saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."—Christian Advocate.

HOW TO ANNOUNCE A HYMN.

In a recent number of the Christian Union Herald, Dr. McGill illustrates how much difference there may be, even in the simple matter of announcing the opening hymn. Here are some of the ways in which it may be done:

Please sing number 75, first and second verses.

Will every one please find number 75? Before we sing the first and second verses of this number, will you please read them with me, in concert, thoughtfully and prayerfully? Now, while we sing these verses, let us make them our prayer.

I want to ask that our first song tonight shall be an appeal to God for His mercy. That is what we are here for. And that is what God is here for—that He may show us mercy. Please all find number 75. Now, if all have found the place, let us read the first and second verses and chorus, in absolute silence, that we may have in our minds and in our hearts what we are going to offer God in song. Now let us sing, softly and prayerfully, these verses.

GREAT THOUGHTS FROM GREAT WRITERS.

Selected by Rev. Chas. B. Mitchell, Montclair, N. J.

HUMILITY AND TRUTH. (600)

Psa. 25:9.

"There is small chance of truth at the goal where there is not a child-like humility at the starting post."—Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

MAN AND NATURE. (601)

Gen. 3:17; Rom. 8:20.

"To me the silence of a summer morning is more touching than all other silence, because the light being broad and strong as that of noonday at other seasons of the year, it seems to differ from perfect day chiefly because man is not yet abroad; and thus the peace of nature and of the innocent creatures of God, seems to be secure and deep, only so long as the presence of man and his restless and unquiet spirit are not there to trouble its sanctity."—Thomas De Quincey.

THE IDEAL MINISTER. (602)

II Cor. 2:17.

"We want broad-minded, meditative men. We want guides, we want reality, we want souls who will do and act before God; who would have that disposition in building up the spiritual church, which the reverential middle age masons had when elaborately carving some graven imagery or quaint device, unseen by man's eye, on the fretted roof of a cathedral—they worked on God's house, and before God!"—Norman Macleod.

THE FOLLY OF ATHEISM. (603)

Psa. 14:1.

"There is, we are aware, a philosophy which denies the infinite. There is also a philosophy, classed pathologically, which denies the sun; this philosophy is called blindness.

"To set up a sense we lack as a source of truth is a fine piece of blind-man's assurance.

"And the rarity of it consists in the haughty air of superiority which is assumed toward the philosophy which sees God, by this philosophy which has to grope its way. It makes one think of a mole exclaiming, 'How they excite my pity, with their prate about a sun!'"—Victor Hugo.

RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS. (604)

1 Cor. 13:2.

"For although to true religion there must be something else besides affection, yet true religion consists so much in the affections that there can be no true religion without them. He who has no religious affection is in a state of spiritual death, and is wholly destitute of the powerful quickening, saving influences of the spirit of God upon his heart. As there is no true religion where there is nothing but affection, so there is no true religion where there is no religious affection. . . . If the great things of religion are rightly understood, they will affect the heart."—Jonathan Edwards.

DOING ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD. (605)

Col. 3:17.

"So we should keep thoughts of Jesus Christ, and of all we owe to him, ever before us in our common work, in shop and mill and counting-house, in study and street and home. We should try to bring all our actions more under their influence, and, moved by the mercies of God, should yield ourselves living thank-offerings to him, who is the sin-offering for us. If, as every fresh duty arises, we hear Christ saying: 'This do in remembrance of me,' all life will become a true communion with him, and every common vessel will be as a sacramental chalice, and the bells of the horses will bear the same inscription as the high priests' mitre, 'Holiness to the Lord.'"—Alexander Maclaren.

GOD'S LOVE AND OUR SERVICE. (606)

I John 4:11.

"Lo! my God, without merit on my part, of his pure and free mercy, has given to me, an unworthy, condemned and contemptible creature, all the riches of justification and salvation in Christ, so that I no longer am in want of anything, except of faith to believe that it is so. For such a Father, then, who has overwhelmed me with these inestimable riches of his, why should I not freely, cheerfully, and with my whole heart and from voluntary zeal, do all that I know will be pleasing to him and acceptable in his sight? I will, therefore, give myself, as a sort of Christ, to my neighbor, as Christ has given himself to me; and will do nothing in this life except what I see will be needful, advantageous and wholesome for my neighbor, since by faith I abound in all good things in Christ."—Martin Luther.

THE WORLD WITHIN. (607)

Matt. 16:26.

"The world within is our great domain, worth infinitely more than the world without. To enthrone God in our inmost being is an immeasurably grander aim than to dispose of all outward realms. We boast of the power which we are daily gaining over material nature, how we bend the elements—fire, wind, steam—to our uses; and we look with compassion, if not scorn, on ages when man did not dream of this dominion. But may not a more fatal ignorance be found among ourselves? There is a loftier power of which we seldom adequately conceive. It is man's power to combine and direct the spiritual elements of his being, his power to free the intellect from prejudice and open it to the influx of truth, his power to disengage the heart from degrading selfishness and to commune with God by disinterested love."—William Ellery Channing.

CHILDREN'S DAY THOUGHTS.

BUSINESS HONOR. (609)

Rom. 12:17; Phil. 4:8.

"I chanced to be walking down Liberty street, in New York," says an artist whom the Detroit Free Press quotes, "during that hard storm we had a few weeks ago. The wind struck a small newsboy about eight years old, and scattered his papers right and left in the mud. As he picked up the few that were near him, I heard him say, 'Dat busts me!'

"For some foolish reason, I laughed.

"Turning on me, he asked, savagely, 'Wot yer laffin' at?'

"'Not at you, my boy,' I hastened to explain, and then to put myself right, I said, 'Here's half a dollar to start you in business again.'

"He thanked me. 'You ain't such a bad guy,' he said, as he scooted in the direction of Park Row.

"This was not the last I saw of him. As I was hurrying to reach the ferry, I heard the patter of feet. He overtook me and asked breathlessly, 'Say, mister, do you go by dis way every night?'

"'No,' I said. 'I don't live in New York. Why?'

"'Cause,' he explained, 'I want ter give you a paper every night till I square myself wid yuse.'

"Now, is there a man," continued the artist, "who wouldn't like to help a boy of that sort, or who doesn't believe that with half a show he would develop into an honorable and successful business man?"

LIFE BEFORE THEM. (610)

Prov. 22:6.

One day on settling with a rat-catcher it was found that the man had laid out in rows the bodies of the dead rats. There were rats of all sizes, large rats and little rats. These were to be paid for at so much per head. His lordship inquired if he was to pay as much for the little ones as the big ones. "Oh, yes," replied the rat-catcher, "the little ones have got life before them."

McKINLEY AND THE EGGS. (611)

Rom. 13:13; 2 Cor. 8:21.

Dr. James Chalmers, of Elgin, Ill., in his memorial sermon on President McKinley, told the following story of his boyhood days:

John Robinson's circus was coming to town, and William wanted to go. The McKinleys kept hens; so did their neighbors. The hens were hiding their nests. William's mother told him that by finding a hen's nest and bringing her the eggs day by day he could get together enough to pay his way into the circus.

And the boy did find a hidden nest just inside the line fence. Day by day he gathered the eggs. But the day before the circus was to come, going to collect his treasures, he startled and drove from the nest the hen that was laying for him the golden eggs. When, lo and behold! she crossed the line fence and rejoined the neighbor's flock of hens, where she belonged.

Poor William hastened to his mother, and with not a moment's hesitation, but with tears in his eyes, said, "Mother, I cannot go to the circus." And then he told her of his discovery that the eggs were not their own, but must be returned to their neighbors.

But when the boy came back after delivering to the neighbors the eggs he had collected, his mother quietly said to him, "You have proved once more, my son, that honesty is the best policy, and you shall go to the circus, William, besides."

Mr. McKinley was asked if it was authentic. "Yes," he said, "and it was the lesson of my life. From that day forth I made it the motto of my life never to appropriate my neighbors' eggs; and," he added with a twinkle in his eye, "it has never kept me from going to the circus, either."

"PERISHABLE PROPERTY. DON'T SWITCH OFF." (612)

Prov. 22:6; Eccl. 12:1.

We once saw this sentence chalked on a car belonging to a freight train. Careless conductors sometimes leave freight cars on side-tracks for a day. Here was one that could not be left even one day off the main track. It had fruit, or something else on board which must be gotten to market at once. Those boys or girls in your class are "perishable property." Don't lose your hold of them an hour. Don't switch them off the track by any carelessness, or irregularity, or dullness, or severity of yours.—S. S. Journal.

IMPORTANCE OF CHILDREN. (613)

Prov. 20:11; Isa. 11:6.

When a king asked the Spartans for fifty of their children as hostages, they replied: "We would rather give you a hundred of our most distinguished citizens; for they have been defeated, while our children may yet live to conquer; they have done their best; our children will yet live to do their best."

TRUTH. (614)

Prov. 23:23; 1 John 3:18.

General Grant was courageous, modest and generous, but his most prominent trait was his truthfulness. "He was," says Gen. Horace Porter in McClure's Magazine, "without exception, the most absolutely truthful man I ever encountered in public or private life. He was not only truthful himself, but he had a horror of untruth in others." An anecdote illustrates this trait.

One day while sitting in his bedroom in the White House, where he had retired to write a message to Congress, a card was brought in by a servant.

An officer on duty at the time, seeing that the President did not want to be disturbed, remarked to the servant, "Say the President is not in."

General Grant overheard the remark, turned

around suddenly in his chair, and cried out to the servant:

"Tell him no such thing! I don't lie myself, and I don't want anyone to lie for me!"

A POOR SCHOLAR'S GIFT. (615)

Prov. 23: 26.

One day each of the scholars of Socrates resolved to give him the richest present they could call their own. There was one who said, "I am a poor young man, without silver or jewels; but I will give you all I have. I will give up my whole self to you." Socrates replied, "You could not give me a better or more welcome gift. I receive it, and will restore it again, better than it was when first given." In due time the care of the teacher made the poor scholar one of the wisest men in the land.

The best gift we can offer to Jesus is ourselves; it is that which he esteems more than if we could give him the wealth and glory of the world. Let us offer to him our hearts, our lives—not for a few years only, but forever.—Selected.

HIS HONOR WITHOUT STAIN. (616)

Prov. 3:3; Zech. 8:16.

There was a famous grammar school in Philadelphia to which the boys of well-to-do parents were sent to be trained in "the humanities." The examinations were severe, and the lads who failed felt themselves somewhat disgraced in the eyes of the whole town. Many of the pupils secretly used translations, or were helped by scholarly friends in their studies.

There is a tradition that one boy, Charles Thomson, refused to avail himself of any help or dishonest trick. He was slow to learn, and timid. His classmates insisted that he appeared at an unjust disadvantage for these reasons at examinations, and urged him to use "ponies" and cribs.

"No," he said. "It is a pity if I do not learn Greek; but it is worse if I learn to lie."

He failed, and was sent down to a lower class for the next term.

Charles Thomson was never, perhaps, first in his class at school; but among the good and noble men who helped to form the republic, he stood in the foremost rank as a man whose honor was stainless. He was long Secretary of Congress, and on disputed points his simple statement outweighed the oaths of noisy disputants. Even the Indians recognized the quality of the man, and received him into their nation, giving him a name which signified, "He who cannot lie."

If he had learned to lie in order to pass in a simple school examination, for what a poor mess of pottage would he have sold his kingly birthright!

WHO WAS RICH? (617)

Prov. 23:7; 1 Tim. 6:6.

"If I were only as rich as he is!" muttered a boy that had just found a crust of stale bread in a garbage barrel, as he eyed a poorly dressed boy leaving a baker shop with a basket of whole, fresh loaves.

"If I were only as rich as he is!" said the boy with the fresh loaves, as he saw another boy on a bicycle, munching candy.

"If I were only as rich as he is!" sighed the boy on the bicycle, as another boy rolled past in a pony cart.

"If I were only as rich as he is!" grumbled the boy in the pony cart as he caught sight of a lad on the deck of a beautiful private yacht.

"If I were only as rich as he is!" this lucky young fellow wished, as his father's yacht cruised in foreign waters, and he spied one day a young prince attended by a retinue of liveried servants.

"If I were as free as that boy is!" impatiently growled the prince, thinking of the boy in the yacht.

"If I could drive out alone with a pony and nobody to take care of me but myself!" thought the pampered boy on the yacht.

"If only I could have a good time like that boy on the bicycle!" longed the driver of the pony.

"How happy that boy with a basket looks!" said the boy on the bike.

"If I could relish my dinner as that boy does his crust!" said the baker's boy. "I'm sick and tired of bread."

Which one was rich?—Exchange.

ONE BOY'S CHANCE. (618)

Luke 12:40; Matt. 25:10.

A gentleman stopped before a sign that told him messenger-boys were to be had inside and then went in.

"Boys," said the gentleman, eying them scrutinizingly, "I suppose you know there is to be an exhibition of trained dogs tonight?"

The faces of the boys showed that they were perfectly aware of that fact.

"Well, I'm looking for a boy to take a blind man to see it. I'm not jesting; I'm in earnest," said Mr. Davis; and then looking at one of the boys who had said nothing, he asked, "Well, what do you think of it?"

"I think I could do it," was the reply.

"How do you propose to make him see it?"

"Through my eyes, sir. That's the only way he could see it."

"You're the boy I'm after," said Mr. Davis, and he arranged for him to meet the blind man.

The exhibition was in a large theater, and the blind man and his guide had a box to themselves, where they would disturb no one; but Mr. Davis, from his seat in the audience, knew that the boy was telling what went on, so that the blind man could understand. Indeed, no one applauded more heartily than the blind man himself.

The following day Mr. Davis again appeared among the messenger-boys, and after a few words with the manager, said:

"Boys, there was offered every one of you, yesterday, a chance for lifting yourselves up in the world, but only one of you grasped it. My friend, the blind man, has felt for some time that he might get much pleasure out of life if he could find some young eyes to do his

seeing for him, with an owner who could report intelligently. My friend is delighted with the experiment. He says he is sure I hit upon the one boy in town who will suit him, and has offered him a good position with a fine salary. Messenger-boys are easy to get; but a boy who can make a blind man see is at a premium. You see, that boy, though he did not know it, was on the watch for a good opportunity, and when it came, he knew how to manage it."—Youth's Companion.

THE STORY OF A CRICKET. (619)

Luke 19:17; Luke 16:10.

Once upon a time all the insects passed in review before the great King. Each one in turn was assigned some task.

The bee was bidden to gather honey from the flowers and to store it carefully in waxen cells. The butterfly was destined to flit hither and thither from blossom to blossom, wave his many colored wings, and add to the beauty of the earth. The ant was commanded to toil busily day after day and set an example of thrift and economy. Last of all, the little black cricket, clad in shining armor, leaped before the great King.

"What canst thou do, my tiny subject?" asked the King, benignantly.

"I can cheer mankind with my one note, and be faithful," chirped the cricket modestly.

"It is well," said the King reassuringly. "Throughout the coming ages it shall be thy task to sing the weary world to sleep. During the peaceful summer nights thou shalt never cease thy soothing note, and all earth's tired children shall bless thee for thy lullaby."

And the cricket has been faithful to his trust throughout the long centuries, never ceasing his monotonous "Creek-creek-creek," in the quiet restful summer nights.—Elizabeth Leigh.

YOUNG SHAFTER'S LESSON. (620)

1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Pet. 3:17.

The Cleveland Leader gives the recipe by which General Shafter learned self-reliance. The story is told in the officer's own words:

Once, when I was a boy at school, our teacher called up the class in mental arithmetic, and began putting questions, beginning with the pupil at the head. I stood somewhere near the middle, and next below me was a boy who was three years older, and considerably ahead of me in our various studies.

"How many are thirteen and nine and eight?" asked the teacher.

One after another the boys and girls guessed and failed; meantime I thought it out. The question had just got to me, when I heard the big boy, who stood next, whispering, apparently to himself:

"Twenty-nine, twenty-nine, twenty-nine."

"Well, Willie," said the teacher, "let us see if you know. Come, now, be prompt." I cocked my head on one side, and said, triumphantly, "Twenty-nine!"

"Next! How many are thirteen and nine and eight?"

"Thirty," said the big boy below.

That was just what I had figured it to be, myself; and I made up my mind then and there, to depend on my own judgment for the future. Ever since when I have had anything to do and have figured out what I thought to be the best way of doing it, I have gone ahead, remembering, when people criticised, or tried to throw me off the track, how that big boy made a fool of me in the mental arithmetic class.

MORTIFICATION OF SIN. (621)

John 15:2; Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5.

"Mortification prunes all the graces of God, and makes room for them in our hearts to grow. The life and vigor of our spiritual lives consists in the vigor and flourishing of the plants of grace in our hearts. Now, as you may see in a garden, let there be a precious herb planted, and let the ground be untilled, and weeds grow about it, perhaps it will live still, but be a poor, withering, unuseful thing. When, let another of the same kind be set in the ground, naturally as barren and bad as the other, but let it be well weeded, and everything that is noxious and hurtful removed from it, it flourishes and thrives; you may see it at first look into the garden, and have it for your use when you please. So it is with the graces of the Spirit that are planted in our hearts. That is true; they are still, they abide in a heart where there is some neglect of mortification; but they are ready to die (Rev. 3:2), they are withering and decaying. The heart is like the sluggard's fields—so overgrown with weeds that you can scarce see the good corn. Such a man may search for faith, love, and zeal, and scarce be able to find any; and if he do discover that these graces are there yet alive and sincere, yet they are so weak, so clogged with lusts, that they are of very little use; they remain, indeed, but are ready to die. But now let the heart be cleansed by mortification, the weeds of lust constantly and daily rooted up (as they spring daily, nature being their proper soil), let room be made for grace to thrive and flourish—how will every grace act its part and be ready for every use and purpose!"—John Owen.

"My God, how wonderful thou art,
Thy majesty how bright!
How glorious is thy mecy-seat,
In depths of burning light!

"Yet I may love thee too, OLord
Almighty as thou art;
For thou hast stooped to ask of me
The love of my poor heart.

"Still, still with thee, my God,
I would desire to be;
By day, by night, at home, abroad,
I would be still with thee.

"With thee, in thee, by faith
Abiding I would be;
By day, by night, in life, in death,
I would be still with thee."

HOMILETIC DEPARTMENT.

GIST OF RECENT SERMONS BY GREAT PREACHERS.

Prepared by G. B. F. HALLOCK, D. D., Author of "The Homiletic Year."

THE ENDANGERED INHERITANCE.

Text: "Lest I mar mine own inheritance."—Ruth 4:6.

The story of the bridal ceremonies of Ruth and Boaz is as beautiful as a dream. It abounds in touches which make the whole world kin. Indeed the whole pastoral is beyond comparison, touching and full of human interest.

An obstacle to the marriage of Boaz and the Moabite Ruth, according to the levirate law, existed which might have interrupted the course of true love, and which might have changed their future, and even the inspired record in the Bible. There was no obstacle to the marriage in the heart of either Boaz or Ruth; there was none in his circumstances; none in her desires. The only obstacle was technical and legal.

It is known that Naomi was resolved to sell the property which belonged to her deceased husband. The next of kin, according to the old law, has the first advantage in making the purchase. Boaz in a manly way gives him the opportunity. This is a trying moment for Boaz; his heart beats fast. Will the kinsman secure the property? Tender hopes balance on the answer to that question, but Boaz must be fair; the offer must be fully made. It must be understood that when the property is bought from Naomi, Ruth goes with it. Oh, Boaz, still thy throbbing heart and listen to the kinsman's answer! The beautiful Ruth, the rose of Moab, is not wanted by this relative. The kinsman will not have the property on these terms. The anonymous relative does not want Ruth as his wife. We cannot tell what his reasons were; he may have had a wife already, but it is certain that he declines to purchase the estate on the conditions named. Noble Boaz, happy Boaz, Ruth shall be all thine own!

We may not admire the conduct of the kinsman, but we can rejoice in the happiness of Boaz; and we can learn useful lessons from the kinsman's words as recorded in this old story: "Lest I mar mine own inheritance." Many men mar noble inheritances. What are some of these inheritances, and how may they be marred?

I. We may notice, in the first place, that there is the inheritance of physical health. The ancients were right who spoke of a sound mind in a sound body as one of the best gifts of the gods. Nowhere does the word of God, rightly translated, speak of the body as vile; everywhere does the Bible exalt the body as a noble specimen of Divine workmanship. The interpretation of the Scripture which makes it degrade the body is false to its true teaching, and is dishonoring to God, the Author of the Bible, the Maker of our bodies, and the Father of our spirits. The man who sins against his body sins against his God. Shall a man dare destroy, dishonor, or pollute the temple of the Holy Ghost? The man who overworks his body sins against God. The man who by intemperance in eating or drinking unfits his body for discharging its normal functions, degrades himself and dishonors the Almighty. Indulgence, laziness, and selfishness are sins against health, happiness and God. The man who sins against the simple economy of health has taken the crown from the brow of manhood and has at the same time defied the laws of the Almighty. Let every man emphatically say "No" when tempted to violate the laws of God in his own body, adding with this unknown kinsman, "Lest I mar mine own inheritance."

II. There is also the inheritance of intellectual capabilities. Of course, there are great differences among men in these respects. But in our day ignorance is not simply a misfortune; it is a crime. Christian men must develop all their faculties to their highest possibilities. All that they have and are belongs to Jesus Christ. No man has a right to be an intellectual dwarf when he might be something of a giant. Every man is bound, by the most sacred obligations, to make the most of himself for time and for eternity.

Let no young man or woman neglect wide reading, careful study, and earnest thought. Young Christians should be model students. They have Jesus Christ for their teacher, and the noblest men and women in the world as their fellow pupils. Intellectual indolence is a sin against our noble nature and against the great God, the world's foremost thinker and your own Creator and Redeemer.

III. There is also, in the third place, the inheritance of a worthy family history. This is a great and unspeakable gift. It is a gift above the worth of all mere financial values. A good name is more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold. A good name is the ripe product of years of noble ancestral character. There is, whatever may be said to the contrary, much in blood. There is often an *esprit de corps* in a noble family history which is influential in preserving its nobility. It takes years to acquire a worthy character, either as a personal possession or as a business influence; but when possessed its value is inestimably great. Is there one who is besmirching his name and staining his character by unholy thoughts and impure acts? In the name of that worthy family history, in the name of an ideal family life, in the name of the great God and Father of us all, I beseech him to stop now. He is marring his own inheritance.

It is a blessed thing to be able to give a noble family inheritance to one's children.

IV. There is also, in the last place, the inheritance of religious possibilities. Intellectual attainments and religious experiences cannot be transmitted to our children. We can transmit our vices; but, strictly speaking, not our virtues. We can transmit our sins but not our graces. There is a sense, however, in which we can transmit tendencies toward good

and God or toward evil and the devil. There is a divine truth in much that is said regarding heredity in our day. It is much for a man to be able to say "my father's God"; it is vastly easier for such a man to say, "My Lord and my God" after having been taught to say "my father's God." Children of Christian men and women stand upon a vastly higher plane of possibility than the children of ungodly men and women. Regarding all these inheritances that we have named let this anonymous kinsman give us instructions and suggestion. With a fuller meaning than he could have known, let us refuse to obey the promptings of evil companions, the suggestions of our own corrupt hearts, and the temptations of Satan, lest we mar our noble, our immortal, our divine inheritance. In Ruth, the rose of Moab, part of the Gentile strain of blood came into the life of Christ. Each one of us may in a more real sense make our lives a part of his and his life a part of ours. We may become partakers of the divine nature. God grant that we may never mar any part of our glorious, or immortal, or divine inheritance. May we add dignity and glory thereto by accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, and so become partakers of the divine nature!—Rev. Robert Stuart MacArthur, D. D.

THE SALVATION OF ZACCHAEUS.

Text: "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke 19 : 10.

This story of the salvation of Zacchaeus on the roadside, by Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God in human flesh, in all his love and grace, is an illustration of the statement made in the tenth verse, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Here is the Son of God at his best, the Son of God at his work of ferreting out, seeking, and saving a lost sinner. It needs skill to find out a thing that is lost. "Is Zacchaeus here?" I would not stand up to preach on this subject if I did not believe from the depth of my soul that that same Jesus is here, and that somewhere between the beginning and the end of this discourse he shall find how to lay hold of some lost sinner or backslider. He comes to Zacchaeus' town, but more than that he comes to the particular street in the town where Zacchaeus is. More than that, he comes to the particular tree, on the roadside, in the branches of which that particular sinner is sitting; and he calls him by his name, and he says to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully;" and that salvation story ends. Well, no, it does not end, for they are together yet. Of course, there is no end to it. Jesus and Zacchaeus met together then at the foot of that tree, and they are together this afternoon. They shall never, never be separated.

I. Now, notice one or two points. To come just at once to what I want to say, this was a man who needed saving. If any of you do not need saving, you may arise and go, for, of course, this is not for you. If you have already been found by the Savior, you are the one who will be glued to the seat; because there is nothing you like to hear better than the old story over again.

Zacchaeus needed saving. He was a publican; and he was a chief among the publicans; and he was rich. Now, "publican" does not mean drink-seller in this connection; although if there are any drink-sellers here, they might listen, because I believe that those in that trade need saving every way.

Oh, I wonder whether there is anybody here who is considered particularly unsalvable, particularly "out of it."

II. I have spoken about Zacchaeus. I have hardly left time to speak about a greater matter.

Zacchaeus "ran before, and climbed up into a tree." Now, if you read the narrative when you go home, you will see at a glance that the Bible is inspired. You will see at a glance the Divine skilfulness of its simplicity. "When Jesus came to the place"—what?—"he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down." Do your part and Christ will do his. Do not lie back in the devil's lap, and expect that any good will ever come to you there; but spring up and out, and away and forward, and Christ will meet you.

He is always going about looking for you. Have no doubt about that. He "came to the place, and looked up, and saw him."

What does that mean? It just means the same thing today. My hearer, you are getting what Zacchaeus got in that tree by the roadside. You are getting a personal call to a personal Savior. He said to him, "Zacchaeus, be quick, and come down. I am wanting to stay with you." That is the Gospel.

Now, I do not read that Zacchaeus looked all around about the tree and said, "Well, I wonder whether he means me." There were not a score of Zacchaeuses up that tree. There was just one little man with that name, and that little man answered to the name, and, quicker than I am taking time to tell it, he came down to meet the Savior—and this is salvation. Answer, answer to your name! What is your name? Your name is "lost sinner." But that is the thing. You do not admit your name.

"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save the lost." If you are not lost, you are not in Christ's program. It is time we understood that. You belong to a class he never contemplated when he came here, if you are not lost. Now, what are we to do? My friend, be honest and answer to your name. Come down! Come down! And be quick! Be quick! And—God pity you—you sit, and sit, and sit in the branches, and gape and stare all around about you, and drop off dead; but you do not come to Christ. It was all very well for Zacchaeus to climb up the tree. It was a great place for seeing. But it was better for him to climb down out of the tree, and come to the living Savior at the foot of it.

Oh sinner, are you willing to come down? It is not safe to be higher up than Christ. Come down! Come down! You are sitting up in those galleries in a state of spectatorhood. Come down, if you please, good friend—a long way down—off your high horse. Come away down; the Lord cannot save you and the horse. He is not interested in the horse. He

will save you. Dismount! Come down! Come down out of pride! Come down out of headiness! Come down out of high-mindedness! Come down out of sympathetic interest!—Come down out of even that!

III. "Zacchaeus made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully," and they went away home together. And this is my last picture. I see them at home, and Jesus sitting down at the table with Zacchaeus. He is a homely Savior. Oh man, you need him under the roof at home. And he will come. He is not there, because you have never asked him.—Rev. John McNeill, D. D., London, England.

THE GROUND OF OUR FAITH.

Text: "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."—Acts 11:26.

"Why do we believe Christianity?" Why do we accept the Gospel in preference to other systems of doctrine? Why are we not Confucianists? Why are we not Mohammedans? Why are we not Buddhists? Why are we Christians? Why do we serve the Lord Jesus Christ? Such questions arise in every active mind, and it is the mission of the pulpit to so expound the Word of God that the church shall fully understand the reason for her faith. Your attention is therefore invited to the "Evidences of Christianity."

I. We believe Christianity because of its source. We say of it, what we contend can be said of no other religion, that it has come from God through Jesus Christ. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith, the brightness of the Father's glory, the Captain of Salvation, the Deliverer, the Friend of sinners, the Head of the Church, the Alpha and Omega. He is designated by these titles to indicate his position in and attitude toward the plan of salvation, which he has perfected with his blood. Jesus makes the Bible Christocentric. It is partly on account of his person, partly because of his teachings, partly on account of his works, that he may be denominated the Creator of Christianity.

II. We believe Christianity because of its code. It is the Word of God, that book which is known to us as the Bible. Every religious system has its sacred book, which is supposed to be invested with supernatural authority. Many of these, however, are only compilations of uninspired men, and while they contain a certain proportion of sound doctrine, they also abound in serious error. As Christians we insist that no book can compare with our Bible, and in doing so we only demonstrate an inevitable conclusion.

It is said that an atheist accosted Dr. Pentecost with the objection that he did not know who wrote all the books of the Bible, and therefore rejected it. Dr. Pentecost, replied with a question. He said: "Is not the multiplication table a work of authority with mathematicians?" "Most certainly," replied the atheist. "But do you know who is the author of it?" continued Dr. Pentecost, to which the atheist responded that he did not. "Then I assume," said Dr. Pentecost, "being a scientific man and conscientious sceptic, you never use the multiplication table." "Oh, yes," replied the sceptic, "I use the multiplication table because it proves itself true by its works." That is just why we believe the Bible.

III. We believe Christianity because of its advocates. It is an axiom in the commercial world that a valuable article of merchandise enlists the best men as agents. This principle is evident in Christianity, for its intrinsic worth has been appreciated by an inexhaustible array of the greatest minds and choicest spirits—men and women who have been willing to live and die for a deserving cause. There is one thing that cannot be reasoned away—it is the power of the Gospel over human hearts. It is because of this fact, that so many have been converted, consecrated and exalted.

IV. The mission of Christianity furnishes a reason for believing. And what is the mission of Christianity? The mission of Christianity is to save from the power and guilt of sin. We believe and rejoice in any power that can save a soul from death.

V. We believe in Christianity because of its requirements. While there is no religious system capable of raising man to so high a spiritual level, there is no condition imposed that we cannot meet. The complicated demands of Judaism have been superseded by the simple justice of the Gospel. Faith is one requirement: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." It is a condition of mercy, for all may comply with it.

Stress is also placed upon the life, which is to correspond with the testimony of the lips.

VI. We have faith in Christianity on account of its conflicts. It is perfectly reasonable to assert that no institution has had so many enemies as Christianity. Not all the armies of earthly empires have faced so great a variety of vicious foes. Even its Founder was despised and rejected by men. The conflict has continued to rage, and doubtless will continue to rage until the close of time. But the Head of the Church is capable of maintaining his position. Its Book is safe; its doctrines secure; its adherents redeemed. We have nothing to fear.

VII. We believe in Christianity because of its victories. The conquest of territory is unworthy of comparison with the effect of the Gospel on human hearts. Christians are a miracle of grace. No empire can glory in such achievements. But Christianity can glory in its innumerable host of soul-cleansed and glorified ones. Many things cannot be explained. It is easy to ask difficult questions. But the one argument of the Church for Christianity that cannot be overthrown is the effect it produces, the souls it saves.

If we believe in the Christianity of the past, and of the present, we also do of the future. The past is not as dark as the future is bright. We have no reason to take other than a hopeful view, for if the cause could prosper in the past, it can now and in days to come. It can come in contact with no greater enemies than it has already conquered.

These are only a few of many reasons for remaining strong in the faith. They are sufficient, however, to satisfy us that we are serving under the right banner. Let us give ourselves to this cause. Let us give our time, thought and means to its extension; let us give to God all the glory.—Rev. C. L. Palmer, Kingston, N. Y.

WATCHING THE SHIPS: CHILDREN'S DAY SERMON.

Text: "There go the ships."—Ps. 104:26.

God made the sea; man made the ships. And it must have taken a long time for man to learn to make them swift and beautiful creatures they are. He had to try many experiments, and learn sharp lessons through failure, before his ships really could go. And now as you watch them you may learn some useful lessons. For we too are like ships in God's great sea. What will become of us? Shall we sail safely, and arrive, some happy morning, in the desired haven? Everything depends on how the ships go.

"There go the ships."

I. Every ship has a captain. You know that they cannot go of their own accord. The hand of man must manage the helm, regulate the sails, control the engine. And all these hands must be obedient to the captain's orders. Who is your captain? Who rules all your faculties and directs your course? Is it Jesus Christ? If so, the ship will sail prosperously and arrive safely. It must meet with many storms; but it is sure of reaching the harbor. If you think of him as first in every plan, at school and at home, Sunday and week-day, then he is your Captain. If you consider before you speak whether your words will please him, and before you act whether your deeds will honor him, he is Captain of your ship.

"There go the ships."

II. Every ship has a chart. The captain studies the chart, and directs his course accordingly. You, who watch from the shore, may often wonder why the ship is taking the course it does, zig-zag, it may seem, or suddenly changing. But if you could see and understand the chart which the captain is studying, you would understand the ship's course. We have our chart of life's voyage—God's Word. And in this case it is not the Captain only who must know the chart, but each of us must understand enough of it to sail rightly. We know that Jesus Christ does all things well; he not only lived according to the chart, but his life helped to make it the beautiful, clear chart for us. When we are in doubt as to the Captain's orders, or the perils of the sea, let us consult the chart. We cannot meet with any difficulty or danger but the Bible has instructions for our guidance.

"There go the ships."

III. What do they carry? They are not empty or idle. A few of them may be pleasure yachts; some of them may be just now laden mostly with ballast. But you may feel sure that a ship on the sea, as a rule, carries freight of more or less value. You eat and drink, you play and sing, you work and think; but that is not all, nor indeed the most important part of life. What is the freight you carry? Is it poor or valuable? In other words, what is your character? The ship is built for the sake of what it is to transmit; and life is to be lived for the sake of character. It would be a pity, when you land, to have nothing to show but a worthless character. It will be a grand thing if, when you come ashore, you have brought what will be a treasure in the sight of God.

IV. "There go the ships." God prosper them, one and all! But much more God prosper you, dear children! You have only one voyage to make; there is no chance of a second trial if you fail the first time. One life is given to each of us. That is why we are so anxious that you may not be wrecked. With Jesus for Captain, the Bible for chart, and a good character for treasure far richer than gold, you will have a happy arrival some sweet morning in the beautiful haven, beneath the shining towers of Salem. And when you land many dear friends will welcome you, and God will give you rest.—Rev. H. Elvet Lewis, D. D., Manchester, England.

MISTAKEN SINCERITY.

Text: "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."—Acts 26:9.

Sincerity is nothing in itself, yet it is much boasted of. Great thinkers may be false thinkers. Intellectual vigor is no guarantee for moral certitude.

This text throws light on some aspects of Paul's character.

I. Paul's self-knowledge; his old self was a perpetual memory, he always remembered his former sins, ignorance and bigotry.

II. Paul's candor; no excuse, no mitigation, even when he says that he "did it ignorantly," he also says that he did it "in unbelief." A right view of one's self is essential to conversion.

III. Paul's conscientiousness; "I ought to do." Conscience is no argument. "The right of conscience" is a phrase which may be used fallaciously. Conscience is to be enlightened, or it may become the most tyrannical of all powers.

IV. This text also throws light upon the Christian argument. In some cases (1) its historical appeal may be lost; (2) its miracles may be ignored; (3) its organized testimony may be disbelieved. The most difficult man to convince is the narrowly righteous man.—The late Rev. Joseph Parker, D. D., London.

THE APPROVAL OF THE SPIRIT.

Text: "Amen, saith the Spirit."—Rev. 14:13.

The Holy Ghost is giving his assent to the truth which has been spoken. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." It is like an old time antiphonal service, when choir answered choir in the House of God.

There are certain great truths to which I am sure the Holy Ghost would say a deep amen.

I. That the Bible is the Word of God, not simply that it contains the Word of God, but is that Word itself.

Peter tells us where we got our Bible. 2 Pet. 1:21, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It is an inspired Book and inspiration is the inbreathing of God himself. This makes the Bible different from every other book.

II. That Jesus Christ is the Son of God. To this truth I am very sure the Holy Ghost will add his amen. In John 15:26 we read,

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, he shall testify of me." And if you would know that Jesus Christ is God's Son I would suggest,

That you simply test him; try him in heathen lands, and tell me if any other story could thrill and transform as the story of his life and death. Dr. Torrey says that whether the story was told in China or England, whether the story was told in India or Australia it was always the same and never was without effect.

Try him in your own life. If you would know that he is the Son of God, just lift him up and behold him as he draws all men unto him. This is the secret of the power of great preaching. It made Mr. Moody known wherever the English language is spoken and constituted Mr. Spurgeon one of the world's greatest preachers. As a matter of fact there is no other theme which may be presented in the pulpit by the minister with an assurance of the co-operation of the Holy Ghost. There may be times when he may feel obliged to preach concerning philosophy, poetry, art and science, but unless these things lead directly to him we have no reason for believing that the Holy Ghost will add his amen to our message, and without this amen the time is almost lost.

III. That the church is the body of Christ. I am persuaded that to this truth he will give his hearty assent. This is Paul's figure over and over. Christ is the head, the church is his body, and we are, as individual members of the church, just being added to him. One day the body will be complete and then the Lord himself will appear. If Christ is the head he must control the body. If his life is hindered and not permitted to flow through every part of it there is confusion, strife, unrest and loss of power. I am quite persuaded that when the preaching, praying and singing are all submitted to the Holy Spirit's control, that whatever may be man's opinion of the service he himself will give to it his hearty amen.

IV. That we are the sons of God. In Romans 8:16, 17 we read, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." To this truth he will say "amen."

This therefore is a good outline of a creed for us today. We believe the Bible is the Word of God, we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, we believe that the Church is the body of Christ, we believe that we are by regeneration the sons of God, and making such a statement we have a right to stop and listen and I am sure we shall hear as from the skies, "Amen, saith the Spirit."—Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D. D., Evangelist.

THE DUTY OF FAULT-FINDING.

Text: "Brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye."—Matt. 7:4.

The Sermon on the Mount was everybody's sermon. All kinds of people were in the congregation. The Master had a word for the poor, the weary and heavy laden, the persecuted—and for all sorts and conditions of men. In one particular all the members of that congregation were alike; *i. e.*, they were all sinners. Some of them were unclean, others dishonest; some were addicted to one vice, others to another; but all alike had broken the moral law. But on the outskirts of the company were certain Pharisees who thought themselves to be better than others, and were universal censors—cynical, fastidious, contemptuous, and hypercritical. Here is the Preacher's word for them: "Judge not, that ye be not judged," etc.

The fault-finders, like the poor, "are always with us." It is related that when the gods had determined to engage in the work of creation, Jupiter made a man, Neptune a bull, and Minerva a house. Momus, standing by, found fault with the man because he had no window in his breast; with the bull because its horns were not under its eyes; and with the house because it was not upon wheels, so that its inmates might move away from unpleasant neighbors. For this Momus was cast out of the divine councils, and ever since he has been among us.

It must not be thought, however, that fault-finding is in itself a sin. On the contrary it is a duty. In the Levitical law it was required: "Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him." It is enjoined also under the new economy: "Reprove, rebuke, with all long-suffering and doctrine." But there is everything in the art of putting things. A duty may become a sin if wrongfully done. How, then, shall we rightly go about this matter? How shall we find fault with our neighbors in such a manner as to help them and please God?

I. "Cast out the beam out of thine own eye;" for if the blind lead the blind they shall both fall into the ditch.

It is not to be understood, however, that perfection is required in the fault-finder, for in this case no one among us could discharge the duty. There is a Spanish proverb, "If our faults were written on our foreheads we should all have to go with our hats pulled over our eyes." But it is required that before a man shall rebuke another, in any matter whatsoever, he shall, at the least, rid himself of that particular sin. As it is written, "Wherefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself, because thou doest the same thing." Do not preach temperance with a flask in your pocket. Do not advocate social purity while your lips are blistered by the telling of unclean tales. Do not prate about political reform if you remained away from the polls on last election day.

It is a curious fact that we are prone to criticise in others the faults to which we ourselves are most liable. "Physician, heal thyself."

II. Come out from your covert: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone." The greatest evil is wrought by hints and innuendoes. The best friends are parted by backbiting. The word itself is significant. The pestilent thing is out of sight. You hear it

buzz, you feel the smart, but you cannot reach it.

III. Put on charity as a garment. "Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

A Russian fable tells of a wise swine named Kavron that found its way into the court-yard of the palace, where it roved at will between the kitchen and the stable. On its return the master said, "Well, Kavron, what have you seen? I have heard that kings' houses are filled with wealth and beauty; that there are fair pictures and splendid tapestries, and pearls and diamonds everywhere." "'Tis all false," said Kavron, "I saw no splendor; nothing but dirt and offal." If we proceed in the same manner we shall also reach a like result. There is some good in every man. It is the part of charity to look on the bright side of character.

IV. Take care. It is a delicate matter to pluck a mote or cinder out of an inflamed eye. You would not go about it with a marline-spike. Yet I have known people to treat their neighbors' faults that way. They are rather proud of calling themselves blunt. They "call a spade a spade." From the ministries of all such may the Lord deliver us! Frankness is a glorious virtue, but bluntness is a vice.

It is the business of every one who would discharge his duty to study tact, which is "the art of putting things." It is easy to call a man hard names. Anybody could do that; but it takes an expert to help a brother by finding fault with him.

V. Change places. Indeed, you will have to. For "with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you again."

VI. Let the mind which was in Christ Jesus be also in us. He was indeed a great fault-finder. But graciously and skillfully he did it. When need required, he could hurl the very lightnings of denunciation: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! How shall ye escape the damnation of hell?" At other times he could reprove as tenderly as ever a mother chide her erring babe: "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." Love was the secret of his art. Like a good surgeon, he cut to save.

We are bound to protect each other as far as possible from sin. Kindly reproof is oftentimes as gracious as the Oriental courtesy of washing the feet. Our faults are like the dust that gathers upon the feet in walking along the way. But there never was such a reproof on the earth as the cross itself. It stood yonder like a finger of admonition to put the world to an open shame. All the faults of all defiled hearts are laid open before it. The love of the Master, who died yonder, was love that should kill the foul spirit within us. He died because we were sinners; and yet, while showing forth that stupendous reproof of sin, he stretched forth his pierced hands and forever covered it. Go, and do thou likewise.—Rev. David James Burrell, D. D.

HONORING OLD AGE.

Text: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man."—Lev. 19:32.

God has been very tender and mindful of the aged in his holy Word. The Scriptures reverently speak of the aged from Abraham who "died in the good old age, an old man, and full of years," to the aged Apostle John, who was so old when he wrote his epistles that he looked upon all other Christians of his time as children and tenderly addressed them as "my little children."

Not only has God set us the example of being reverent before the hoary head, but he has positively commanded us to "honor the face of the old man." God means for us to obey this command as strictly as the command, "Thou shalt not steal." There are many reasons why we should be courteous and kind to the aged.

I. First, because of their experience and wisdom. Book learning is not enough. Our greatest education comes from the school of experience. The aged have passed through this school. It is well to listen to their words of wisdom. We are all apt to be visionary in our youth, but with the coming of old age there is normally a ripening of the mental and spiritual faculties.

Judgment becomes established upon the sound basis of long experience. Wide observation of life and its temptations brings knowledge which can be obtained in no other way. Right estimates of relative values correct the arbitrary standards of youth, diminishing the consideration paid to shallow brilliancy and honoring chiefly the steady, immovable plodders who stand faithful through the years to their humble task.

The aged man is beyond the reach of such moral infirmities as depend upon the inexperience of youth. He is past the more strenuous struggles of competitive business, and the consciousness of the approaching end of life tends to promote serious attention to the life of the spirit.

Age is the most favorable period of life for the rounding out of character into gracious symmetry. All around us are beautiful lives that have grown sweeter and more mellow as the step grew slower and the sight and hearing began to weaken.

The young are apt to think that they can reach the heights of wisdom without laboriously climbing the steps of experience. They find that they are wrong. Time proves to each generation of men that wisdom, whether it be of earth or heaven, is only gained by the discipline of life.

The men of hoary heads have gathered the fruits of a long and large experience. Especially are they worthy to receive our sincerest honor when God's truth has been teaching them and has led them all along the path of life. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." With all the respect we pay to the learned, we should "rise up" before the men whom God has been long teaching in his school—those who have learned much of Jesus Christ.

II. Second, we should honor the aged because of their physical infirmities. These dear ones will not be with us long. He who does not love a little babe in its helplessness, and he who does not honor the aged in their weakness, has very little heart in him. "He is a savage in his heart, no matter how polished ex-

ternally, who does not honor the face of the old man."

In these days of intense activity it is not an easy thing for the aged to keep up with the procession of humanity. And there are people who have no patience with the aged. They regard them as being in the way, and they treat them with neglect. But let our strong and vigorous men and women keep in mind the divine command of our text. God has a purpose in prolonging the mortal lives of some of his saints, even after they have apparently finished their course. He would thereby teach us the wonders of his ways.

Let us honor these dear aged ones, for God has honored them. Let the kind word and the glad hand be given to them. Let none of us be guilty of adding unnecessary furrows to their brows.

III. Third, we should honor age, for it is beautiful. "Long life and length of days" is considered complete and beautiful. It is like a shock of corn which cometh in its season. Death in youth seems unnatural to us. The broken column is a symbol of unfinished life. It is better to live through the whole threescore years and ten, into full age.

There is a beauty of old age which neither youth, nor the prime of manhood and womanhood possesses. It is not the beauty of form or complexion; it is not the grace of motion. It is an inward beauty, shining through the chinks which time has made, illuminating the face with a soft, mild splendor, giving sweetness to the voice, gentleness to the action and an inexpressible charm to every look, word and act.

IV. Fourth, let us rise up before the hoary head because it is near to heaven. Christianity has shed a new glory over old age. It is the vestibule to the temple of a higher life. The aged patiently wait in the vestibule, ready to be admitted to the joys of the Lord.

I knew a couple of four-score years who said that they found their last days their happiest days. One reason they gave was that they were nearer their heavenly home—on the bright side of their three-score years and ten—they said on the bright side, because nearer the everlasting glory. They were like the peach which grows sweeter as it nears the time to drop from the stem. Such people never grow old in heart.

Let us honor the aged. They are wiser than we are. Soon they will be with us no more. Let us appreciate them while they are here. Now is the time to bring them flowers and to speak kindly of them—Rev. R. R. Biggar, D. D., Wheeling, W. Va.

OUR GIFT AND GOD'S CLAIM ON IT.

Text: "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."—2 Tim. 1:6.

These words were addressed to Timothy himself. He was St. Paul's faithful colleague. He had been with him in Macedonia, Rome and Ephesus. The pastorate of the Ephesian church was given him. These words would almost suggest some little weakness or failure of duty in Timothy. Perhaps he was a little timid because some might have despised his youth in dealing with some difficult questions in his ministry. The Apostle here calls upon him to exercise his God-given gifts in Christ. He is called on to stir up the manifold gift of God for the salvation of his fellow men. The words are distinctly addressed to young men. Let us consider some of the gifts bestowed upon us by divine benevolence.

I. The gift of heredity. Read 2 Tim 1:5. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which was first in thy grandmother Lois, thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded is also in thee." Holy Scripture glorifies a pious ancestry. It is a part of the manifold gift of God. These hereditary qualities and capacities according to their nature and measure must have tendencies for either good or bad. Grace flows through a pious ancestry. It is much easier for a man whose father and mother were Christians to come into the kingdom than it is for those whose parents never trained them at their knees in the way of grace and life. "I thank God whom I serve through my forefathers," says St. Paul. His forefathers, though Pharisees, were religious men. So much for his inheritance. "Stir up the gift that is in thee" that it may be a gift from thee to thy children.

II. Our ethnic gift. We bless God that a part of his manifold gift to us in Jesus Christ is the fact that we are a Christian nation. "God hath not so dealt with any nation." We are not a nation, clad in bear skins, and roaming forests. We are not a horde of wild barbarians. God has said to this nation: "Stir up the gift that is in thee, and use it for the world's good." God's hand has been laid upon us in benevolence and mercy. The Almighty has specially gifted the English-speaking people of the earth. We thank him that we are not living in Turkey or Greece or Russia or China. The Pilgrim Fathers brought with them the fear of God in their heart. Let us see to it that such a priceless gift shall show no signs of decay. Our responsibility as a nation in the realm of government, pure politics, temperance and peace and evangelization amidst the other nations of the world is great. Let us "Stir up the ethnic gift."

III. The Christian gift. This is above all. When a man is born again immortality has begun, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Stir up this gift of immortal life that is in thee by the inbreathing power of God. If you have the gift of speech, consecrate it to God. If you have an inventive genius, consecrate it to God. If you are blessed with great means, consecrate them to God. If you have great education, culture or professional training, stir it up to the glory of God. How precious the opportunities of this Christian gift! What in you is its measure? How far will it reach? How long will it last? How much will it accomplish? Look at William Carey in India, John Bunyan in Bedford, John Wesley in Epworth, and a host of others.—Rev. W. F. Dickens-Lewis, M. A.

PRACTICAL THANKSGIVING.

Text:—Psalm 116: 12—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"

I want to lodge firmly in each of your hearts this question which the Psalmist asked of himself, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" You are men and women of feeling sufficiently fine to appreciate the baseness of ingratitude. You also believe that God is the source of all your blessings. You are therefore concerned, or ought to be, not to rest under the condemnation which you are so ready to pronounce upon the ungrateful. Let us, therefore, speak of three channels through which true gratitude to God will express itself.

I. There is first, the inward life of the spirit. As we pass through the residence streets of our city these wintry evenings, it is between rows of houses tightly closed. Doors shut, windows down, shades drawn. But shining through every crevice, flashing through glass, glimmering through curtains is the light which tells us that there is human life within. And what a varied life it is which is going on in there in secret! What happiness in some of those rooms, what misery in others! What innocence in some, what guilt in others!

Each one of these closed and lighted houses is a symbol of the human spirit. The light of life shines through the fleshly walls, giving information of a person within. But the life is a secret life. This secret life, it is hardly necessary to say, is our real life. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

And now let me ask you, What place do you give to God in this secret, this real life of yours? Some people seem to fail in grasping the idea that religion is essentially an inward thing. They think of God as an officer of the law who ought to be satisfied so long as they commit no serious breach of the peace. With a strange unconsciousness, on the one hand, of their own sin and, on the other, of God's yearning for their fellowship, they say, "God has nothing to complain of in me, I have done no great wrong." They attach little or no importance to religious emotions, saying, "Feelings do not count. Conduct, character is the important thing."

Apply that to some of your human relationships. Suppose your wife should be punctilious in the performance of her wifely duties and did not love you; would you be satisfied? It should not require very much thought to see that feelings are a very important part of character.

Let me repeat, therefore, What place has God in your secret life? "Where is thy God"? His place is in that closed and lighted chamber where you live alone, into which you can admit no other save God.

And let me tell you this, that no merely outward expression which you may make of your gratitude to him for all his benefits toward you will be of any value if you do not in this secret life of yours give him rightful place. Can a child's gifts to his parents make up for lack of love?

II. There is, secondly, the use we make of our possessions.

No one is so poor as to be exempt from the duty or deprived of the privilege of sharing with those whose need is greater than his. The starving beggar is bound by the law of Christian love to share his crust with one who is hungrier than he is. The wounded soldier lying on the battle-field, burning with thirst, is bound to share the last drops in his canteen with the comrade dying beside him. The poorest man in the church has the privilege and is under the duty of contributing out of his poverty to religious and charitable causes.

But, as we all know, it is not the poor who most need to be urged to give. It is one of the strange contradictions of human nature that it is easier for us to give when we are poor than when we are rich.

There is many a rich man in our country today who began life as a poor boy on a farm, or in some small town or village. His ambition was to be a rich man, his standard of riches being the standard of the time and the place. Today his annual income exceeds many times over the total sum with which he thought he would be satisfied as the accumulation of a life-time. His standard of living is out of sight of his early one. But he is a rare man if his standard in giving has risen proportionately. In those days he always had at least a nickel for the Sunday offering, and ten dollars toward the new church. His possessions have increased by the thousand fold; how many fold have his gifts increased?

Industry, thrift, energy, enterprise, sagacity, inventiveness, courage, are all fine qualities, and they are needed in the man who would make a great fortune. There is also great potential beneficence in large wealth. But the best friend of the existing order can hardly deny, in view of the methods by which many of the great fortunes have been made, the preposterous size to which they have grown, and the use that is being made of them, that there is in some men a greed with which the greed of the proverbially greediest of animals is not to be compared.

Immense sums of money are being given away. I do not believe the world has ever seen anything like it before. But still greater sums are needed. There is scarcely a church, a college or a charitable institution of any kind whose usefulness is not more or less hindered by lack of funds.

It is not uncommon for good Christian people to show signs of becoming weary of the incessant demands upon them. They frown and say, "What next?" "Where will this thing end?"

There is no end. There will be none until the kingdom of God be come. The demands will not be less, they will be more and still more.

But let no one think that he is compelled to give anything. God wants no unwilling gifts, no gifts that are accompanied by scowls and complaints. He wants no gifts from those whose houses grow ever larger and more beautiful and more full of the lovely creations of art, whose personal expenditures steadily increase, and who still add to their fortunes every year, but who give grudgingly and sparingly. If that is the way you feel, my brother, you had better keep your money, for

"God loveth a cheerful giver," and he will find enough such to carry on his work.

But know this, O man, that in so doing thou art writing thine own sentence of condemnation as surely and as irrevocably as did the priest and the Levite in the parable, when, coming upon the poor man lying by the roadside who had been robbed and beaten, they "passed by on the other side."

III. The third channel through which real gratitude to God will express itself is personal service. Giving God his rightful place in our inward life is not enough. The most generous use of our possessions for the building of his kingdom is not enough. The Self must be given in some sort of Christian service. It is as great a mistake for a man to think that he can buy himself a substitute as it is to think that prayer makes action unnecessary. Too many of our successful men of affairs are disposed to think it a fair division of responsibility if they give the money and others do the work. But money is only one talent for which we shall have to give an account. All the traits and powers of Personality, which God has so carefully elaborated that no two individuals in the race are exactly alike, and all the particular opportunities given to each individual and to no one else, are likewise talents for whose employment we shall some day be called into reckoning. The meetings of the church for prayer, the social gatherings, the Bible School, Board and Committee work, the assistance of the unfortunate, the visiting of the sick, the administration of educational and philanthropic institutions, the work of political parties and civic government all call for personal service according to ability and opportunity. No amount of prayer or of money can commute the duty of giving OURSELVES to the service of the kingdom. There is a false streak in our gratitude to God for his benefits toward us if we withhold it.

God keep this word of the Psalmist echoing and re-echoing through our souls, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"—Rev. William Rivers Taylor, D. D.

THE MONOTONY OF SIN.

Text—"And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."—II Kings 14: 24.

You read the pages of history, and as far back as you can go you will find our latest styles of wickedness already old-fashioned—cruelty, avarice, unprincipled ambition, licentiousness, drunkenness. The archæologists have been shedding much light upon these subjects within the last few years, and, judging from what they tell us, if you should take one of old Pharaoh's courtiers through the streets of New York some night, trying to show him modern life in its most startling and novel varieties, you would soon catch him yawning. "We had all that in Egypt," he would cay, "before the pyramids were built. You have nothing new in what you call New York." Or if it were one of Nebuchadnezzar's nobles he would rub his eyes sleepily and say: "Yes, but, you know, we did these same things rather better in the good old days in Babylon." Or if you should take a Roman senator of the days of the Empire to some luxurious scene of debauchery, he would complain that it all seemed rather tame and insipid compared with the spreads that Apicius used to give in Rome before he committed suicide—poor fellow. "Suicide! What in the world did he commit suicide for?" "Oh, he got tired to death of it all after awhile."

So one of the revelers of the old French kingdom would remind of his own Paris; and one of George the Fourth's boon companions, of London and Brighton. Not a man of them all would admit that the fast society of New York had discovered any really novel way of going to perdition. Always some old Jeroboam or other, whose monument crumbled into dust a thousand years ago, had set the fashion for each of these latest novelties in wickedness.

I. Sin—I suppose it began some time by some one's perverse invention; it was new then; but so long ago as we know anything about the world sin has been always old-fashioned, stale, weary, flat, unprofitable. One Jeroboam will set the style for a hundred thousand senseless, servile imitators; and Jeroboam himself copied some Aaron or other sinner a little further back. Wide is the gate and broad is the road that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; and they all fall into the same monotonous gait before they have gone far.

II. Use your own eyes and see if this is not true. Watch a company of gamblers; the same monotonous throwing the dice, or shuffling the cards, hour after hour, all night, every night if the infatuation has thoroughly enslaved them. A friend of mine chanced to pass the night in Leadville in its so-called prosperous days; and in the evening, walking about to see the town, stepped into one of its gambling establishments. After watching the men for a little while he went back to his lodging place and tried to sleep. Not succeeding well, he rose the next morning at the first break of day and walked out into the street again. He soon found himself in front of the same gambling establishment, and listening, could hear behind the door the click of the game. He pushed open the door and found everything going on much as he had left it the evening before. "Has not the game stopped yet?" he asked an attendant. "The game never stops," was the answer. My friend got such an impression as he never had received before of the "worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." "The game never stops."

III. Or take the sin of profanity. Why, a parrot can learn to swear as well as a man. I am told that it is an accomplishment which those grotesque birds are especially apt to pick up—and no wonder; there are no other forms of human speech which are repeated with such wearisome sameness of reiteration. If you want to be an original conversationalist you might better make up your mind never to speak at all than learn to swear. Half a dozen phrases to apply to all possible events and conditions! It is really pitiful to see the noble

faculty of human speech shrunken to such narrow dimensions.

IV. Have you studied the air of those people who have really made it their business to find their pleasure in dissipation, searching out for themselves the most startling and daring forms of selfish entertainment? Their faces grow jaded so quickly; they are soon tired of life; it takes so short a time to complete the whole circuit of novelties for them.

V. Ah, but there are people in this world, thank God, to whom the experiences of life have not been teaching that melancholy lesson —those who have let God lead them on in courses of devoted service. Every honest workman who fulfills his daily task with a godly purpose toward his family; every bright minded scholar, inventor, or discoverer, who has opened up new regions of the universe for the good of his race; every reformer who has set his eye on some distant height of liberty or righteousness, to which he would lead the people—such men may have often been exhausted and sometimes discouraged, but at least their faces are kept free from those ugliest lines of disgust and weariness of life.

VI. This is a lesson which all the ages have been teaching—that service makes life fresh and interesting. But the real secret of it, the secret of service itself, is love. Jesus Christ who gave His life for men, first clearly taught the world that lesson. It is love like His own, love caught from His own.

One would like to persuade everyone to be a good Christian, partly for the reason that it would make the world so fresh and entertaining to everybody. Really, if there were no other reasons, it would be well worth while for some people to begin to follow Jesus Christ for the novelty of it. Such a refreshing change for the man who has always lived to please himself until he is tired to death, to begin to think of some one else, and to live for some one else. A man who has once learned from Jesus his Saviour to love and serve devoutly could live the longest life through happily, and at the end come back to his divine Friend, saying: "Thou hast kept the good wine until now." And I suppose as the seasons of eternity roll round still he could say: "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

VII. Which kind of life shall we choose? Let me leave with you two contrasted pictures. One is from the pen of the great English satirist who once wrote this description of the employments of Vanity Fair: "Pursuing what mean ends; grasping and scrambling frantically for what petty prizes; ambitious for what shabby recompences; trampling from life's beginning to its close through what scenes of stale dissipations and faded pleasures;"—that is, as our text puts it, forever and ever repeating over and over the identical sin of some old Jeroboam son of Nebat, who long ago first made people to sin. That is the one picture, the one leader.

But the other leader, the other picture, is this: "Thou, Lord Jesus, hast kept the good wine until now." Which leader do we choose to follow through the coming years?—Rev. William R. Richards, D. D.

UNUSUAL.

FELLOW COUNTRYMEN.

An English actor tells a story of an Irishman named Flanagan, who had been out of work for some time, and at length applied to a circus proprietor for a position.

There were no regular places open, but the manager looked Flanagan over and said:

"Our largest lion died last week, but we kept his skin, and if you like to get into it, and be shown as a lion, you can have the job."

Flanagan agreed. At the first show the proprietor stepped into the cage and said, "Ladies and gentlemen: To prove the docility of this roaring lion, I shall order him into the cage with a ferocious tiger."

Flanagan hung back, but the circus proprietor prodded him with a sword and threatend to run him through, and the "lion" was driven into the same cage with the tiger. There he backed into a corner and cried, "Shpare me!"

Then the ferocious tiger jumped to his feet and answered, "Ye needn't be afraid o' me! I'm an Irishman meself!"

FACIAL MASSAGE.

A valuable prize will be given to any reader of the Messenger who can say this in one breath without stopping to think:

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck
If a woodchuck would chuck wood?
He would chuck as much wood as a woodchuck could
If a woodchuck could chuck wood.

"What became of the little kitten you had here?" asked a lady visitor of the small girl.

"Why, haven't you heard?"

"No."

"Was it drowned?"

"No."

"Lost?"

"No."

"Poisoned?"

"No."

"Then whatever did become of it?" said the lady.

"It growed up into a cat," was her reply.

WHAT ABOUT THE MINISTERS CASUALTY UNION?

This organization was created for the purpose of furnishing indemnity to clergymen when disabled by accident or sickness. Organized over three years ago on a plan proved by long experience to be safe and at the same time furnish this protection at cost. The Union has already paid over 200 ministers indemnity claims amounting to over $5,600. This excellent protection has only cost from $5 to $7 per year. The success of the Union has been so marked that members are enthusiastic and glad to recommend it to every clergyman. A postal card will bring full particulars.

The Ministers Casualty Union,
Minneapolis, Minn.

QUOTABLE POETRY.

ILLUSTRATION—A DEMAND FOR OUR CHILDREN.

The home has its enemies, and none more virulent than the saloon. Any evil that would destroy the tranquility of the home, except the saloon, would not be tolerated by the American people. But we allow this deadly monster to live and even help to keep it alive. It has become very bold and demands our boys and our girls to fill up the ranks which are being emptied at the rate of seventy thousand annually. Not only do they demand our boys and girls but they get them too. One boy out of every five homes goes to his grave by the drunkard's route. These appalling facts do not impress us as they should. One home in five lays a boy in a drunkard's grave. Look through your precious flock, fathers and mothers. Which one of your boys will you give for this annual slaughter? One home out of every five must yield one boy. It is a law to which we ourselves have agreed. Go through their sleeping rooms while they are all at rest. Choose one of your boys for a drunkard's life and death; choose one of your girls and hand her over to a life of shame. Ah, fond mother meditate while you choose; "there is John our eldest lad, I could not spare him. There is Mary, a pure and lovely soul. She shall not be sacrificed to greed and avarice. There is little Joe, why, I'd as soon think of taking his dear life just now as to hand him over to the saloon." So muse, fond mother, but in spite of your musings the deadly monster is after your boys and your girls, and every five homes in the land furnishes one victim every year. The mothers may moan and the fathers may threaten, but this grinning monster keeps throwing into his infernal mill 70,000 men and women each year. When will we say "Enough?"—Rev. Robert C. Wuestenberg.

In connection with this statement Mr. W. recited the following poem:

"WHICH SHALL IT BE?"

"Which shall it be? Which shall it be?"
I looked at John,—John looked at me.
(Dear patient John, who loves me yet
As well as though my locks were jet.)
And when I found that I must speak,
My voice seemed strangely low and weak;
"Tell me again what Robert said;"
And then I listening bent my head.
"This is his letter:

'I will give
A house and land while you shall live,
If, in return from out your seven,
One child to me for aye is given.'"

I looked at John's old garments worn,
I thought of all that John had borne
Of poverty, and work, and care,
Which I, though willing, could not share;
Of seven hungry mouths to feed,
Of seven little children's need,
And then of this.

"Come John," said I,
"We'll choose among them as they lie
Asleep." So walking hand in hand,
Dear John and I surveyed our band.

First to the cradle lightly we stepped,
Where Lillian, the baby, slept;
Her damp curls lay, like gold alight,
A glory 'gainst the pillow white;
Softly her father stooped to lay
His rough hand down in loving way,
When dream or whisper made her stir,
And huskily he said, "Not her."
We stopped beside the trundle bed,
And one long ray of lamp-light shed
Athwart the boyish faces there,
In sleep so pitiful and fair.
I saw on Jamie's rough red cheek
A tear undried; ere John could speak,
"He's but a baby, too," said I,
And kissed him as we hurried by.
Pale, patient Robby's angel face
Still in his sleep bore suffering's trace;
"No, for a thousand crowns, not him,"
He whispered, while our eyes were dim.
Poor Dick! sad Dick! our wayward son,
Turbulent, reckless, idle one,—
Could he be spared? "Nay, he who gave
Bids us befriend him to the grave;
Only a mother's heart can be
Patient enough for such as he;
And so," said John, "I would not dare
To send him from her bedside prayer."
Then we stole softly up above,
And knelt by Mary, child of love;
"Perhaps for her 'twould better be,"
I said to John. Quite silently
He lifted up a curl, that lay
Across her cheek in wilful way,
And shook his head: "Nay, love, not thee;"
The while my heart beat audibly.
Only one more, our eldest lad,
Trusty and truthful, good and glad—
So like his father: "No, John, no;
I cannot, will not, let him go!"

And so we wrote in courteous way,
We could not give one child away;
And afterward toil lighter seemed,
Thinking of that of which we dreamed;
Happy, in truth, that not one face
We missed from its accustomed place;
Thankful to work for all the seven,
Trusting them to One in heaven.

An up-to-date Old Colony clergyman, who has been feeding his flock on the writings of Darwin, Huxley and Spencer in preference to what the writer of the Pentateuch penned about the creation, on a recent Sabbath frankly, as aptly, said from the pulpit, "God didn't speak to Moses the way I am talking to you."

The old man was sitting on the roof, gazing placidly across the rushing waters.

"Washed all your fowls away?" asked the man in the boat.

"Yes, but the ducks swam," smiled the old man.

"Tore up your peach trees?"

"Don't mind it much. They said the crop would be a failure."

"But the flood! It is up to your windows!"

"Wal, them windows needed washing anyway, stranger."

METHODS—SUMMER SERVICES.

THREE IDEAS FOR SUMMER.

[The editor sent out recently several requests for plans for summer work in the churches.]

We present three of the replies—all are from the conservative standpoint. But while one preaches the old gospel and lays the emphasis on it, one is not afraid to use an innovation to draw a crowd to hear the old gospel. The other believes that nothing else is needed. All show earnestness; but the ones who take the forethought in attracting the audience are apt to be the ones who have the forethought to provide them with an up-building sermon.

In other words let us beware while depending on the old gospel that we do not get lazy. The men who preached the old gospel with the greatest results were not afraid of innovations—Wesley with his out-door preaching, Spurgeon with his illustrations, Moody with his Sankey.

THE PLAIN GOSPEL.

"I have no *new* plans to suggest. I purpose carrying on my work along the same lines as heretofore, viz: preaching the whole truth and faithful visitation.

There is a craving in many churches today for something new. The old gospel will not suit them; they want a mixture of many ingredients—a little gospel, a little novelty, a little astronomy, a little philosophy, and what not, will suit them better than the pure unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ.

They want a silky, sunny, flowery, honey, and kid-glove style of preaching that passes people without touching their hearts or arousing their consciences, but ministers true to their profession will not pander to public taste, but preach the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

There are those who would judge of truth by their own feeling, but he that would declare all the counsel of God must not consult his own feelings, nor the feelings of others, either.

There is a natural aversion to preach the severe and terrible truths to the people, and there is the same aversion in people to hear them, and what makes the difficulty much more, they say of preachers very often as Ahab said of Micaiah, "I hate him for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil."

Churches have become worldly, cold and formal, simply because preachers have not had the courage to preach against the prominent sins of the age. To preach the gospel in its purity and fullness we must preach the word without adding to it nor detracting from it; preach the threats as well as the promises, law and gospel, grace and duty, commandments and examples, death and life, reward and punishment, Sinai and Calvary, holiness and love, justice and mercy!

Faithful preaching alone is not sufficient to enable a church to retain its spirituality. Let those who preach the truth do all they can in fostering its growth in the hearts of men by personal visitation.

Pastors who neglect the important work of visitation cannot be regarded as true shepherds of the people and cannot be very successful soul winners for Christ.

Faithful and wise visitation is absolutely essential towards realizing blessed results."—Lewis Thomas Hughes, Bangor, N. Y.

WILL USE A PHONOGRAPH TO ATTRACT AUDIENCE.

"Our plans for summer work are yet incomplete; and yet I think I am safe in saying that I shall make my preaching the strongest factor, as I have always tried to do. It has never seemed to me a wise plan to make the accessories to a service of greater apparent importance than the message which the minister is called to deliver. For this reason I have endeavored to make my ministry in the pulpit the most effective part of my work, and this I expect to do during the present season.

There is one innovation outside of the ministry of the pulpit, however, which I am hoping to introduce into the summer's work.

Both our Church and manse face the public park, which on Sunday afternoons is filled with people, many of whom never enter a church. In order to reach them with the choicest classics in song, I am planning to place a phonograph on the porch of my home for an hour each Sabbath evening just before the service, and close the concert with an invitation to worship.

This being a State Normal School town and my church practically a college church, the summer is largely a season of relaxation for us and preparation for the beginning of the school year."—Victor F. Brown, First Congregational Church, Platteville, Wis.

THE EVENING SERVICE OUT-OF-DOORS.

One of the most encouraging features of our work during the past year, has been the increasing interest shown by the men. The attendance of men has been growing at all the services. During the winter, there was organized a Men's Club that now has about 100 members. The Club meets monthly when an address is given by some one who has been brought for the purpose. A good social hour of the kind that men like follows, with refreshments, also of a masculine order. This Club is hoping to do a good deal for the help of the evening service on Sundays. It will have charge of church printing also, and a few other matters.

During the summer, we will probably hold our evening services out of doors on the church lawn. There is plenty of space for so doing, without having the services too close to the street. We shall try to have the services of a popular nature, without departing in the slightest from the dignity of church worship.

Last summer we tried this plan with considerable success. We combined the Y. P. S. C. E. and the evening service, holding the union service a half-hour before the usual time of evening worship. The first half of the meeting was in charge of the leader of the Y. P. S. C. E. Then, without any intermission, the pastor assumed charge, preaching a short sermon. Occasionally the sermon was on a theme in line with the subject that had just been discussed, but not usually. This entire service never lasted over 75 minutes.—Paul R. Hickok, Presbyterian church, Delaware, O.

Gist of Recent Sermons.—(Continued from page 539.)

THE POOR RICH FOOL.

Text—So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.—Luke 12: 21.

The parable which closes with these words can never be forgotten. To hear or read it once is to remember it always. The story needs no explanation; its teaching is unmistakable. It is a story of judgment. Christ had such a man as He speaks of in view. Perhaps some of those who heard Him could remember the sudden death of a rich landowner whose unexpected end had been the sensation of a week. He passes judgment on his life. The man who lived and planned thus was a fool.

The parable explains how it is that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." It is a poor life whose possessions are outward and material. The life on which judgment was passed was poor and foolish, because it was not rich toward God. What did it lack? What qualities were a-wanting? What are the proofs of this rich man's real poverty?

I. The lack of thanksgiving. He was rich, and his ground brought forth plentifully, but his heart is never stirred by a feeling of gratitude. Never a thought of God as the giver of increase comes to his mind. He thinks only of "my fruits," "my goods," "my barns." He speaks only of himself. "I" is his only counsellor. Most likely he attributed his prosperity to his skill, his sharpness at a bargain, his wise planning, and anxious toil. Perhaps, like many another, he boasted of the little he had when he started life, and spoke of his present worth with pride. He did not see that God had any part in it. That of itself is a proof of poverty. "A grateful mind is a great mind." Thankfulness of spirit is one of God's treasures. It "blesseth him that gives, and him that takes." Pride and presumption are children of unthankfulness. Not to be able to see God's goodness is a greater lack than color blindness. It misses all the glory of life, as color blindness misses all the glory of the world. To be lacking in thankfulness means that we are poor in ourselves.

II. The lack of helpful service. The man is embarrassed with his riches. He has no room where to bestow his fruits. He takes counsel with himself as to what he shall do. In a flash the answer is found. He will pull down his barns and build greater, and there bestow all his fruits and all his goods. It is a resolve to "stow," not "bestow." He will carry on business as before, but on larger lines. No other thought comes to him. But this, too, is a proof of his poverty. He has no idea of giving, only of getting; no idea of using, only of storing. He sees none of the possibilities that are in his hand. He has no higher conception of the use of prosperity than to store it in a barn. He saw not that all gifts are gifts for men, to be used as such in the service of God. He never dreamed of stewardship or service. The plenty which came from his fields should have taught him better. The increase came not from stowing, but from sowing. Had he used his means as he used his grain, putting them out to service in the help of man, true riches would have come to him. He would have been rich toward God and rich in himself.

III. The lack of any worthy outlook or interest. What are his thoughts for the future? What hopes and plans does he cherish? "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." He plays with the thought of retiring from business. He has enough and more than enough. There is no need to rise early and toil late or endure the heat of the day. He will take life easily, will enjoy himself. He is his own Alpha and Omega. All is for self. He will be a glutton and a wine-bibber. His pleasures are of the flesh. No higher vision dawns upon his soul. No interest in spiritual aims or objects suggests itself. God and the hereafter are absent from his scheme of life. "Many days" is the limit of his outlook. Man's highest interests are without interest to him. The soul of goodness, the love of truth, the gladness of helping, the joy of fellowship with God are no attractions. The life is so poor and mean that it knows not what it lacks.

IV. In what he leaves behind him, and takes with him. He is summoned hence by the voice none can disobey. He had planned for "many days," and he has not even one. "This night"—in the midst of plan and hope, the inevitable end surprises him. What does he leave behind him? His fruits, his goods, his barns. Nothing more. No one rises up to bless his memory. His mourners are few if any, though he may have had a grand funeral. He leaves no imperishable monument in deeds of kindness, or of helpful service, or in an honored name. What does he take with him? Nothing of what he had. His treasures were of the earth, and the earth keeps them. He only takes his character, such as it was. And with that he entered the eternal world a beggar, and a fool.—Rev. John Reid, M. A., Scotland.

THE DISOBEDIENCE OF INACTION.

Text: "He left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded."—Josh. 11: 14.

That would be a pretty good epitaph if we only deserved it. Personally I could wish no higher eulogy than this simple, pregnant sentence. No doubt Joshua did other things which the Lord did not command him—sins of commission for which pardon was needed; but the sterling quality in this man's life was that his sins of commission were not aggravated by sins of omission. Yet it is just here that most of us fail so badly, and, strangely enough, fail without much sense of regret or stirrings of repentance. I do not believe that the average man or woman today suffers many pangs of conscience from the thought of what he or she should have done, but failed to do.

Suppose we make a mental inventory this morning of some of the things we omit to do of all that the Lord commands us. Let us analyze in a simple, practical fashion, our disobedience of inaction.

I. And first of all, and perhaps saddest of all, let us write down in the tablets of conscience our omissions to the dead, the things we might have done to make life sweeter to those beyond our ken. That, of course, is to touch the very nerve center of remorse. The keenest remorse, I am persuaded, comes not from contemplating the actual sins of our past, but from remembering the opportunities of love and sympathy we failed to render to our dead. After all, the real specter of human life, which nothing can lay, are the letters of sympathy we did not write, the visits of help we did not make, the words of cheer we did not speak. Ah, happy they of whom in remembering their dead it can be spoken that they "left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded."

II. That leads me to mention another item in this inventory of our sins of inaction: The opportunities of service we are missing day by day to those who are still with us. It would be a pity if we were to realize our sins of inaction only when the opportunity to atone for them is forever past.

III. But there is a deeper aspect of these sins of our omission. There is a disobedience of inaction toward our heavenly Father as well as toward our earthly friends. Do you remember on what kind of sins the last indictment before the judgment seat of Christ is to be based? Do you realize that what Christ is going to call you and me to account for then is not our sins of commission, but our sins of omission? It is not the big things we may have done, but the little things we did not do, that in Christ's thought will condemn us at the last. "I was a hungered and ye gave me no meat." The disobedience of inaction; the selfish torpidity of somnolent souls; the sluggish indifference of earth-blinded men; these are the things that arouse the wrath of the Lamb and bring down the judgment of heaven. It is a startling truth, but not less the truth. The mistakes of our life may be many, but it is not our mistakes but our neglects that at the last will shut us out from the kingdom of light. You remember, too, how in the parable of the talents, Christ emphasizes the same striking thought.

IV. What are some of the causes of these sins of omission? Why do we leave so many things undone in the commencement of life? Partly through sheer thoughtlessness, no doubt. Many a time we omit to speak the kindly word or neglect to do the loving service, not through want of heart but through want of thought. And yet it is just that very thoughtlessness that God calls us to account for. If our religion is worth anything at all, it should train us in the grace of considerateness.

But, after all, that is not the inmost reason for our sins of omission. To say that thoughtlessness is the animating cause is only to beg the question. The real source of our sins of neglect springs from the false emphasis we put on life. We emphasize the wrong things. We magnify the trifles, pour out our energy on things that perish with the using, and ignore the realities which alone count in the eternal scale.

Here, then, we touch the spring of our sins of neglect. Under the pressure of wealth and pleasure, we are putting the emphasis on the wrong things. Life is out of proportion. Character is ill balanced. Instead of looking at the things which are unseen and eternal we are looking only at the things which are seen and temporal. Doing that, we leave undone the duties which alone avail in the service of God. We are great in the mint and the anise and the cummin. We admire the æsthetics of religion, and pay generously enough for the decorations of the faith—the mint of eloquence, the anise of ritual, the cummin of music. "But," says Christ, "you are omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith." What is needed? What is the cure of this sin of inaction? The cure today is where Joshua found it four thousand years ago, in the whole-hearted surrender of the life to God. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," put the emphasis in your daily life on His service and glory, and then living for Him all these other things shall be added unto you. The days are slipping by. Life's opportunities are sifting through our fingers like running sand. The deeds of kindness, the words of love, the service of Christ, the opportunities of helping others, will not always be within our reach. Omit them not. Leave nothing undone of all that the Lord commands, and remember that "inasmuch as we do it unto one of the least of these His brethren, we do it unto Him."—Rev. Donald Sage Mackay, D. D.

THE LONELINESS OF THE HUMAN SOUL.

Text—"So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God."—Romans 14: 12 (R. V.)

One winter evening I happened to be among the crowd which New York empties into Brooklyn at the close of each day's business. Amid the clanking of the ferry chains and wheels, the clamor of the newsboys, and the incessant ringing of the car bells, multitudes of people came pouring from the boats into the streets, to mingle with other multitudes being discharged from stores and factories.

As I watched, from the car platform, the throng hurrying along with quick, but serious steps, only now and then catching plain sight of a face, as it crossed the path of a light, it seems to me like a compact and forceful stream that was rolling up the hill—a stream in which, as in all streams, the separate drops had flowed together and lost themselves. Who thinks of rivers, lakes, and seas, as made up of drops? We say, and think, simply "water." So we say, and so we think of men and women in large numbers—"the people," "the multitude," "the masses."

But as the car ascended the hill, and struck into the long avenue, the procession was rapidly thinned. One after another disappeared through doorways. By twos and threes, and

half dozens, they turned down the side streets. They were going home.

Each one of this to me indistinguishable crowd was going to a place where he was well known. He might be the most common-place of men; but to those who shared his home he had individuality as marked as if he had been among the greatest. However other men's lives might appear together and be lost in the mighty stream, his life, to them, would always run separate and alone. His personality would remain entirely distinct.

May we not pause here just a moment, to think what a blessed provision this is—that within the great world, in which, individually, we are of such small account, there should be for each of us a little world in which we are of much account?

But let us return to the home-going throng. Having followed them from the crowded streets into the bosom of their families, it is but a step more to go with them into solitude, where we realize that each one of them is a spiritual unit complete in himself, self-bounded, self-contained, and possessing an identity that can never be merged or lost. Notwithstanding the inextricable interlacing of human lives, and all the dear associations of friendship and love, each one of us stands as much alone before God as if there were no other men in existence.

I. In how many impressive ways this essential lonliness of the human soul is exemplified. We are born alone. Go to that little stranger whose wail breaks the silence of the childless home. Whence did it come? Who came with it? All alone it came from the eternity of the past. It cannot even ask the meaning of the great strange world, or this perplexing life into which it has been ushered. It can only look, and wait, and wonder. The little soul is fast locked up within itself; and as it cannot come out to you, you cannot go into it. You cannot enter its soul. No dungeon wall os bastioned tower was ever more impregnable than the invisible barriers about that baby spirit, which keep you out, and keep it in.

II. We acquire our knowledge alone. The child that sits beside me in school cannot learn my lessons for me, neither can my teacher, nor my parents. By an act of mental concentration, which shuts out all the rest of the world, and leaves me alone with my task, I must master it.

The same thing is true of practical knowledge or experience. Alone I must learn life's lessons.

III. We suffer alone. No one can feel your pain but yourself. No one can endure your weariness. No one else can bear your sorrow and loneliness. How powerless you were, when your sick child lay moaning in feverish anguish, to enter into his soul, and diminish his suffering by sharing it! He was your own dear child; but were you not shut out as by a wall of adamant?

IV. We always feel our essential loneliness, too, when confronted by some great question of duty. We bear up silently under the awful pressure as long as we can; but at last it becomes too much for us, and we seek father, mother, pastor, Christian friends. We pour out our story. But as we take our leave, is it not with the feeling that, after all, we bear the responsibility of the decision?

V. We die alone. If you have ever stood at a deathbed; if you have ever seen a soul start off on the long journey, you know how lonely a thing it is to die.

While General Grant lay dying, one of the physicians whispered a few words of cheer into his ear, bidding him to be bold and brave "as he was in the old times." "What do you mean?" asked the dying hero, feebly. "I mean as you were in the old war times," said the physician, "when you had the army back of you." "Ah!" came the response sad and low, "but I haven't the army back of me now."

As the gallant old soldier had moved his tent nearer and nearer to the banks of the Jordan, his family and friends and the whole country had moved with him. They were all encamped with him on the shore. They heard the rush of the black and swollen waters. And he knew it. Some of them would have gone with him, if they could. But he knew they could not. "I haven't the army back of me now." He must go alone. And so must you and I, my hearer.

VI. We go to judgment alone. When the Lord comes the second time to earth, we are told that the dead, small and great, shall rise from their graves, and stand before Him to be judged. The earth has never had a hundreth part as many living human beings upon it at any one moment, as will at that time be assembled before the Great White Throne. But not one shall be lost or overlooked in all those millions. They will not be dealt with in masses. No one will be called upon, or permitted, to answer for another; "each one of us shall give account of himself to God." Alone we must answer for the deeds done in the body.

Oh, what a solemnizing thought is this! There is many an interesting and valuable lesson to be drawn from it!

1. One of the most interesting things in connection with it is the light it throws upon the philosophy of Love and Sympathy. Why is it that the heart-hunger for these things is so strong and so universal? Is it not because in Love and in Sympathy the soul makes the nearest approach it can ever make to escaping from this solitude to which its own completeness condemns it? Because in Love and Sympathy two souls, for the moment, become one, and divide the common burden of being.

2. It reminds us also very forcibly of our duty to refrain, on the one hand, from interfering with the individuality of our neighbor by judging him, and from being false to our own by seeking to cast the responsibility of our misdeeds upon others.

3. But the supreme lesson is your need of Christ as your Friend. He can do for you what no other friend can do. When you are sick, or lonely, or tired, or discouraged, He will be with you to sustain and cheer. When you come to die, He will be your faithful Guide, and you will be able to say with David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff they com-

fort me." And when you come up for judgment, He will stand by you as your all-powerful Advocate to plead for you, and to cover you with the robe of His spotless righteousness.

He will be your Friend, if you want Him. Will you accept Him as your Saviour and Master? If so you need never again be oppressed with this sense of loneliness, in life or in death, for He will enter the innermost chamber of your heart, where no other being can enter, and take up His permanent abode there. Oh, lonely soul! Admit Him now while He stands and knocks.—Rev. W. R. Taylor, D. D.

THE DIVINE AFFLATUS.

Text: Be filled with the Spirit"—Eph. 5: 18.

There is an instinctive craving in human nature for excitement, which this text recognizes, and for which it legitimately provides. Paul assumes its necessity when he instructs us as to where we should, and in what we should not, find it. Men flee from stagnation and hate monotony; they love the tingling of excited nerves, the throbbing of the quickening heart-beat. People rush to the theatre, to the races, to sensational literature, to the dance, that the passions may be excited, that the pulses wildly beat. Who cares for recreation, music or oratory, that does not stir the feelings? The emotional nature is natural in man. It gives zest to life and makes it worth living. Humanity has always regarded emotionalism as essential to happiness. This is the secret of the love of amusement, and the strange infatuation for intoxicants, narcotics and opiates.

Paul wrote to his Christian converts from heathenism: "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit." Here we are taught, and may we ponder the lessons:

I. That we need the Holy Spirit throughout our lives. In contrast with the lewd songs of the heathen revellers, Paul wants the Church ever to respond with rich, and glorious melodies. The wine which he alludes to here stands for all sensual means of stirring the emotional nature. It represents the worldly means of gratifying desire for pleasure. It has power to produce and intensify the appetite for itself, and consequently leads, with other social follies, to excess. Poor and ruinous substitutes are all devices for the divinely provided agent of stimulation. We are taught—

II. That the Holy Spirit is available to the children of God. Think of the Spirit that is available, and study the law of His availability.

III. That we may be filled with the Holy Spirit. Not partly under His influence, but filled with Him.

IV. That we ought to be thus filled. We are responsible for the power we have, and for all we might possess.

V. Not to be filled involves us in guilty responsibility. We have the promise; we have the command; we feel our religious necessities, and see the needs of those about us. Why are we not filled? Our guilt is as great as the authority of God is great. Every Christian living below his privilege is a standing misrepresentation of the Lord, who called him to be His representative, to show what the Spirit can do in a human life when wholly consecrated to God.

VI. The effect of the Spirit's possession justifies the sacrifice necessary to secure it; for the measure with which you are filled is the limit of your power with others.—Rev. Clarence True Wilson, D. D.

ONE PLAN FOR A MISSIONARY PRAYER MEETING.

Have Kipling's poem, "The White Man's Burden," recited. Outline in chalk on the blackboard a pack such as a man might carry, and label it, "Our Burden for Our Brothers." By cross lines divide it into six sections, and assign a member to each section, to describe a part of the burden; as, The mission-study burden, the prayer burden, the giving burden, the waiting burden, the Christian nation's example burden, the healing burden. The first member should emphasize mission study, and suggest some plan. The second should call attention to the missionary prayer cycle. The third should give facts about the world's gifts to missions, and emphasize tithing. The fourth should tell about the slowness, but sureness, of results in some early mission. The fifth should tell how the rum and land greed of Christian nations hinders, and the sixth give facts about medical missions.—J. F. C.

EACH MEMBER ON A COMMITTEE.

The Rev. Frank W. Luce, pastor of the Maple Avenue Methodist Episcopal church, St. Louis, sends out suggestive leaflets giving outlines of work to be undertaken by his church this fall. They are announcements of dates and special subjects of special evangelistic meetings, and also lists of seven special committees, most of them consisting of from 30 to 50 persons. These committees are: Evangelistic commission, spiritual work, calling, social greetings, invitation and attendance (two sections, 1 general, 2 young people), work among children, advertising (two sections, 1 general, 2 hotels and other public places). The last page outlines the work of each committee. The first five persons named constitute the executive board for each committee. Apparently each member of the church has his special assignment of work. He knows what it is, and he knows that everybody else knows it.

PECULIARITIES OF LONG ISLAND.

The class in geography in one of the Brooklyn schools was asked by the teacher: "What are some of the natural peculiarities of Long Island?" The pupils tried to think, and, after a while, a boy raised his hand.

"I know," said he.

"Well, what are they?" asked the teacher.

"Why," said the boy, with a triumphant look, "on the south side you see the sea and on the north side you hear the sound."

A POINTED SERMON.

"Alexander, the coppersmith, did me much evil."—2 Tim. 4:14.

This was the striking text that made the big congregation of Calvary M. E. church sit up and take notice at a recent Sunday night service. The preacher was the Rev. Dr. Charles G. Goodell, Calvary's new pastor, recently from the Hanson Place Church, of Brooklyn.

Dr. Goodell did not preach his entire sermon from the coppersmith text. It was reserved for that important part of the service where the ushers pass the collection baskets. Confronting the unsuspecting congregation at the critical moment, Dr. Goodell said:

"In the words of Paul, as recorded by Timothy, I say that 'Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil.'"

Every sound in the crowded church was stilled as if by magic.

"I am able to state with absolute accuracy," continued the new pastor in a voice of thunder, "that there were 1,700 coppers—cents, pennies—in the collection of last Sunday."

While the startled congregation was recovering its nerve, Dr. Goodell pointed the moral substantially as follows:

"This scheme of giving all the pennies to the church is hardly fair—to the newsboys. You gentlemen start down town Monday morning with nothing but dimes, quarters and bills in your pockets. As a result, the newsboys are forced to lose time and expend profitless energy in making change. It would be infinitely better for all parties if you would save your pennies for the boys and drop your silver in the collection basket."

There were only a few coppers in the night's collection.

"It was a sort of clerical joke," said Dr. Goodell. "I wanted to touch 'em up just a little. There was nothing of complaint or criticism. The Sunday collection averaged $124—a highly satisfactory figure—but it was perfectly true about those 1,700 pennies."

THE KINETOSCOPE AS A MONEY MAKER.

A PROFITABLE FIELD FOR THE MAN WITH LIMITED CAPITAL.

The field for the profitable operation of the stereopticon and the kinetoscope or moving picture apparatus is undoubtedly greater today than ever before. The man with limited capital and a reasonable amount of energy can turn his hand to nothing more profitable today.

T. H. McAllister, 49 Nassau street, New York, manufacturing optician and dealer in lantern slides, has issued a catalogue of over 250 pages, with full description of various styles of apparatus and carefully classified lists of thousands of views. This catalogue is free on request. In addition to the slides now in stock, new ones are in preparation representing the actual naval and military operations in Russia and Japan, and bulletins of these will be issued from time to time as they are ready. These bulletins, with the catalogue, are free. Send for them.

"American Problems," by Joseph A. Vance, pastor of Hyde Park Presbyterian church, of Chicago, is a discussion of the four greatest problems now confronting the American nation, the Negro, the relation between capital and labor, the liquor question, and the problem of the great city. The clearest and most convincing discussion is that of the labor question, which he judges keenly and impartially, seeing the rights and the wrongs of both capital and labor.

In the chapter on the Negro, he seems to be tilting against some windmill of a theory about the teaching of Latin and Greek to the Negro.

The book as a whole is well-written and well worth reading. Winona Publishing Co., Chicago.

We have received a folder of the Maple Avenue Methodist Episcopal church of St. Louis, the Rev. Frank W. Luce, pastor. On the front page is a picture of the church, within is a cordial invitation to the prospective visitor of the World's Fair to come and worship at this church. On the last page is a map of the region of the city north of the World's Fair grounds with the location of the church marked. The whole is a bright bit of religious enterprise.

A bulletin issued by the "Young People's Missionary Movement" states that three summer conferences will be held this year. One will be at Winona Lake, Ind., June 17-26, one at Lookout Mountain, Tenn., July 1-10, and one at Silver Bay on Lake George, July 22-31. The aim of these conferences is to deepen the spiritual life and missionary purposes of the church of the future, and also to serve as councils for the organization of the year's campaign and as training schools for leaders. The speakers at the conferences will be well-known missionary leaders among the evangelical churches of America.

The Report of International Reform Bureau is a most interesting document, showing the important legislation that it has secured in the direction of moral reform. At the Reform Bureau's request the following bills were introduced and passed by Congress: The Wellington-Ray divorce law for the district of Columbia; the Gillett divorce reform bill, preventing "divorce colonies" in the territories; the Broderick act, protecting girls from 16 to 21, in the District of Columbia; the Johnson-Hansborough Anti-Canteen Amendment; the Gillett-Lodge bill, prohibiting the sale of liquors, opium, and fire-arms, by American traders, in the uncivilized islands of the Pacific; the Lodge resolution favoring an international temperance treaty; the Bowersock Amendment, prohibiting the sale of liquor in immigrant stations; the Teller Amendment closing the gates of the St. Louis Fair on Sunday. There are now pending in Congress other bills approved by the bureau and introduced at its request; bills in restraint of intoxicants and opium; in defense of the American civil Sabbath; in restraint of obscenity and gambling, and laws for the protection of youth. Every pastor ought to have the information contained in this report.

PREACHER'S VACATION.

THE BEST PLACE TO SPEND YOUR VACATION.

SEASON OF 1904 AT LAKESIDE.

Lake Erie Students Conference by International Y. M. C. A., June 17-26.

Lakeside Assembly, July 6 to August 10.

Camp Meetings—English, August 11-22; German, August 15-21.

German Sunday School Convention, August 22 and 23.

Ohio Epworth League Biblical Institute, August 23-31.

Reunion 23d O. U. V. I. at Hotel Lakeside, August 25 and 26.

For information or programs write to C. W. Taneyhill, Lakeside, O.

NORTHFIELD CONFERENCES.

Twenty-three years of Conferences has seen the little assembly of God's people who met at Northfield, first in 1880, steadily develop into an interminable series of religious gatherings, of which seven are to be held this summer. Already the advance inquiries concerning Conference dates and speakers promises an unusually large attendance. As in past years the Northfield management have thrown open the Northfield Seminary buildings and arranged for other accommodations at "Camp Northfield," and "The Northfield," a neatly appointed hotel open the entire season, and in addition, several hundred tents will be located on the school campus. Reduced railroad rates have been secured and a graduated scale of living expenses is maintained so that none may be debarred from sharing the helpful teaching of Northfield. Further details of this work will be furnished by A. G. Moody, who has charge of the business end of the Northfield work. Following is a list of the separate Conferences and their speakers:

Student Conference, July 1 to 10, inclusive. Mr. John R. Mott will preside, with Mr. O. G. Frantz in charge of the music. The speakers thus far secured are: Mr. Robert E. Speer, Rev. Johnston Ross, England, Rev. Charles Cuthbert Hall, D. D., Prof. R. A. Falconer, George Sherwood Eddy, India.

Northfield Summer Bible School, July 1 to 29, inclusive. The purpose of this school is to provide longer and more consecutive courses in Bible study than can be obtained at the Conferences. No tuition fees are charged.

Young Women's Conference, July 12 to 19, inclusive. Meetings are held mornings and evenings, the afternoons being set aside for social times and recreation. Among the speakers already announced are: Rev. J. R. Miller, D. D., Mr. Robert E. Speer, Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D. D., Dr. Wilton Merle Smith, Miss Margaret M. Slattery, Mrs. Margaret Sangster, Mrs. W. A. Montgomery, Mrs. Margaret Bottome.

Summer School for Women's Missionary Societies, July 12 to 19, inclusive. This is an interdenominational Conference of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions for the United States and Canada. Among the speakers who will be present at this Conference are: Dr. Cline, Mr. Robert E. Speer, Mrs. W. A. Montgomery, Rochester, Dr. Gamewell, China, Miss Ellen Stone, Mrs. Margaret Sangster.

Summer School for Sunday School Workers, July 16 to 25, inclusive. This Conference is planned with the idea of studying intelligently the problems confronting Sunday Schools, of systematizing the work and equipping the workers. A partial schedule of the speakers includes: Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D. D., Miss Margaret M. Slattery, Miss Marion Thomas, Mr. E. P. St. John, Miss Florence H. Darnell, Mrs. J. W. Barnes, Mrs. M. G. Kennedy, Mr. Marion Lawrence.

General Conference of Christian Workers, July 29 to August 14, inclusive. Mr. W. R. Moody will preside. The music of the Conference will be under the direction of Mr. George C. Stebbins and Mr. Lewis S. Chafer. Speakers expected are: Prebendary Webb-Peploe, London, Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D. D., Rev. Cleland B. McAfee, Rev. Howard W. Pope, Rev. Len G. Broughton.

Post Conference Addresses, August 15 to September 12, inclusive. To be delivered by Prebendary Webb-Peploe and others.

TRY THIS ON YOUR PREACHER.

Not a few preachers would be glad to be the victims of such a practical joke as was recently played upon Rev. Mr. Hageman, of Oxford, Mich. At the annual meeting of the Congregational Church the question of hiring a preacher comes up for discussion.

At the last meeting of this society, when the subject was brought up, a good deacon arose, and said:

"All those in favor of retaining Brother Hageman for another year—at the same salary—will please rise."

Not a person rose, and the minister who was present, felt as uncomfortable as possible, and heartily wished himself anywhere else. Then the good deacon who had put the question arose again, and said, with a twinkle of the eye:

"I see no one favors that motion, so I will put it again in this way: 'All those in favor of keeping the Rev. Mr. Hageman at an increase of salary will please rise.'"

Everyone got upon his feet. Then it dawned upon Mr. Hageman that he had been the victim of a joke, and a smile lighted his eyes, and the color returned to his cheeks. Some of his best friends had planned the surprise, and the little scheme had worked to perfection.

A pamphlet by A. C. Gaebelein has been sent to us exposing "Millennial Dawnism." The literature of "Millennial Dawn" is scattered broadcast among Christian people, and many are led astray by its delusion. This pamphlet, which is for free distribution, is an attempt to antidote the false teachings of the "Millennial Dawn" series, and would be of value to those pastors, among whose members these misleading books have been circulated. A. C. Gaebelein, 80 Second St., New York City.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS.

GAINS AND LOSSES: A SAD CONFESSION.

REV. SMITH BAKER, D. D.
Williston Congregational Church, Portland, Me.

The president of one of the theological seminaries of New England recently read an elaborate paper before three ministerial bodies, upon "the gains and losses" which the so-called Higher Criticism has brought to the ministry and the churches.

The paper and its conclusions have the more significance because the author has been classed among the "more liberal" in his thinking, though not as a radical; because he has had an extensive experience and observation in church work in both east and west in our own country; and also because it was evident that the paper was most carefully, fairly and sincerely prepared with the purpose of an impartial judgment, and as such commanded the united respect and admiration of those who heard it.

It is not our purpose to discuss his propositions, but simply to call attention to them as worthy the consideration of thoughtful students.

Among the gains, he thinks the "higher criticism" has brought:

I. "A larger, truer knowledge and worthier conception of God."

II. "Greater unity in our thought of the universe, of the world, of our race, of the world of matter and of mind."

III. "Larger gains in working knowledge."

IV. "Greater enthusiasm, 'Esprit-de-corps' and optimism."

Among the losses which have come, he mentions:

I. "Loss of the subtler, more psychic or spiritual side of religion, largely gone."

II. "Widespread, practical disuse of the Bible, with its stores of Spiritual nutriment."

III. "Large loss of a Present Living, Daily Savior."

IV. "Large loss of a sense of dependence,—of the prayer life, of the life of faith"

V. "Large loss of the sense of the Church as the body of Christ, in the noble, Biblical sense of that term."

VI. "Large loss of the Herald's or Prophets' place in preaching and in Christian witnessing."

The above are in the president's own words as he wrote them. As stated above, we do not propose to discuss them, though we doubt very much the accuracy of the statement of the "first gain," mentioned, as, "a larger, truer, more worthy knowledge and thought of God."

We have tried to read diligently the discussions and conclusions of the so-called "advanced thinkers," and have failed to discover wherein the majesty of God's nature, his immeasurable love or any of the attributes of his character, have been more fully, vividly, or eloquently presented than by conservative writers for the past one hundred years. Indeed, to find the profoundest, most far-reaching, most impassioned presentations of the nature of God, his plan for man, his condescension, the supremacy of his love, no modern writer or preacher has equaled that of some of the fathers, as any one conversant with the literature of the church knows full well. Yea, it seems as though the lofty conceptions and presentations of the greatness and love and glory of God had become dim.

Nor can we agree that there has been "a gain in enthusiasm," unless it is a gain in the intellectual enthusiasm of those who advocate the "new views," for we have noticed that such persons always wake up and become most in earnest when they are pitching into the "old theology." When a lad, we had as a pastor a most excellent old minister, but who was extremely dull as a preacher save when he was preaching against the Baptists. Then he would almost make the meeting house tremble, he became so excited; and one day we heard mother say to father, "I wish father Davis loved sinners as much as he hates the Baptists." Of intellectual enthusiasm of that kind there has been a gain, but of spiritual enthusiasm there surely has been a falling off. We have attended a great many religious conventions, associations and conferences during the past twenty-five years, and it is a strange fact that the spiritual enthusiasm has been mostly on the conservative side. The new theology has seemed to cool down the intensity of feeling. Outside of college and theological seminary class-rooms, and a few minsterial gatherings, it has failed to wake up the people and has deadened religious earnestness. Neither do we find that its preaching draws the people, or that its teaching increases the number of seekers after Christ. As an evangelistic power it has been a failure, and the common testimony is that in the churches where it is taught the spiritual life is low. With its so-called "greater knowledge" it has not produced greater results.

The losses mentioned are a confession of failure, granting, however, that the president's statement of gains is correct. Notice the losses he names and mark what a sad confession. Notice them! These are his words, not the words of a seventeenth century "heresy hunter," but of a fair-minded and sympathetic student of the trend of things. His own words are:

"Spiritual side of religion largely gone—practical disuse of the Bible—Loss of a Present Living Savior—Loss of a life of daily prayer—Loss of a sense of the Church as the body of Christ—Loss of the prophet's place in preaching."

All the above as the result of "larger, truer knowledge and worthier conceptions of God!"

What a result! Better less of such knowledge of God and more of spiritual life! Forward in scholarly criticism, but backward in a sense of a present living Savior! We have no doubt the professor's statement of the losses is true, and each of them could be proved by the history of the church for the past twenty years, but where there is confession there is no need of proof. The churches are commencing to see it and are calling for the old gospel.

Sincere ministers are realizing it and are returning to the Bible as the Word of God, and to Christ's atonement upon the cross as the only hope of the world.—From The Bible Student and Teacher.

SERMON DEPARTMENT.

JESUS IN TOUCH WITH MODERN LIFE.

DAVID JAMES BURRELL, D. D.

"Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well."—John 4:6.

The best preacher that ever lived was an itinerant; he had no parish but went hither and yon preaching the gospel. He wore no gown nor surplice nor canonicals of any sort. He had no pulpit: a mound in the valley, the prow of a little boat swinging at the water's edge, the steps of Solomon's Porch, the corner of the street; these were his "throne of eloquence." He rang no bell to summon his congregation, but went out into the highway and hedges after it. And this was how he chanced to be at Sychar on a certain memorable day. He knew that "a woman who was a sinner" was coming to draw water and he desired to meet her. It was high noon when he reached the place; his disciples at once betook themselves to the city to buy food; and, left alone, wearied with his journey, he "sat thus on the well."

The word "thus" is full of practical suggestion; it tells the whole story of the relation of Jesus to human life and experience. For, indeed, he who sat upon the curb that day has in no wise changed his attitude, but is the same forever in his purposes of mercy toward all who pass by.

I. Observe, he sat there as a man. His divinity in no wise affected the fact that he was "very man of very man." He had come from heaven, through the gateway of Bethlehem, to deliver a message of stupendous importance to the children of men. For some thousands of years the divine word had been proclaimed by angels, theophanies, and prophets with fire-touched lips; but now "the Word is made flesh and dwells among us." "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

And this Son with his life-giving message was, as Carlyle would say, "the humanest" preacher that ever spake to men. He had emptied himself of all glory—crown, scepter and royal purple—that in human guise he might draw near to us. He stooped to conquer. His posture is that of persuasion: "Come now, let us reason together," saith he; "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This is preaching; a man with a message drawing near to men. And it was thus that he sat on the well.

II. He was, moreover, a poor man. He had come to church afoot and clad in homespun. He sympathized with all who, like himself and his little group of followers, had no money in their purse; and to such he brought a gospel which would make them rich toward God.

His interest in the welfare of the neglected multitude was one of the credentials of his Messianic office. "Go tell John," he said to certain messengers who had come from the Prophet of the Wilderness to inquire whether he was really the Messiah or not—"Go tell John that the poor have the gospel preached unto them."

It is sometimes said that there is no place nor welcome for the poor in our metropolitan churches. If there be a church anywhere that does not give welcome to the man in mean apparel as well as to him that wears the gold ring, it is no real church of Christ, for he came to save all sorts and conditions of men.

I see a little group of peasant folk coming up the middle aisle; a young man with a middle-aged woman leaning on his arm, followed by a company of sun-burned men in linsey-woolsey. Are there wealthy pewholders who look askance at them as intruders here? Nay; God forbid! Let every worshipper rise and give them welcome! For this is the Lord of the sanctuary with his mother and the Twelve. Set up your conventional walls of separation wherever else you will, but never in the church of Jesus Christ! Here is the one place in the world where the rich and the poor meet together and acknowledge the Lord as the Maker of them all.

If it be true, as alleged in some quarters, that the church has measurably lost its hold upon the lower classes, it may be traced to a departure from the spirit of social fraternization which prevailed among the primitive followers of Christ. There was a time when "Not many mighty, not many noble were called"; but nowadays the church is largely recruited from among the rich and influential: and while this may mean an accession of power in some directions, it is certainly not an unmixed good; nay, rather, so far as it may stimulate a caste-spirit it is wholly disastrous to the Kingdom of Christ.

A legend says that once, when Thomas Aquinas was sitting in the Vatican with Pope Innocent IV, while contributions of gold and silver were being carried into the Papal treasury, the Pope said, with much self-satisfaction, "You see, Brother Thomas, the time is past when the church must needs say, 'Silver and gold have I none.' To which the Angelic Doctor replied, 'Yes, Holy Father, the time is also past when she could say to the paralytic, 'Take up thy bed and walk!'" If we would regain our influence over "the unchurched masses," we must assume toward them the attitude of Christ himself, who never as an Aristocrat but always as a Man of the People entered sympathetically into their utmost needs and longings. Let the mind that was in Christ Jesus be also in us.

III. It was, furthermore, as a workingman that he sat upon the well The hands which were lifted in invitation that day were marked with the callous ridges of toil. His lot was cast with the producers of the world; and his attitude toward the industrial problems, which arise from time to time, is destined ultimately to solve them all.

At this moment the coal barons of the Wyoming Valley and their employees are confronting one another with fire in their eyes. I seem to see them passing by this man seated on the curb of the well. On the one hand the capitalists are saying, "We claim the right to

combine for mutual advantage." This is the rationale of "trusts." To which the Master, in pursuance of his gospel, makes answer, "Aye; combine however you will; so long as you do not infringe upon the rights of the community or of other men: but when, by your trusts and syndicates, you drive the small producer to the wall, then hands off! Live and let live! Do as ye would be done by." On the other hand the employees are saying, "We claim the right to combine in our labor unions." To which he answers, "Well and good, so long as by so doing you inflict no wrong upon the community, your employers, or your fellow workman. But when you undertake to say that a man may not labor for whom and when and on whatsoever terms he will call off your mobs! Live and let live! Do as ye would be done by."

And this is the proposition which will ultimately solve the problem. Capital has its rights; labor also has its rights; but neither capital nor labor has the right to inflict an injury upon the social fabric. It is the function of Law to determine the danger line and see that neither party crosses it. The function of the gospel is to see that both parties are so Christianized as to have no desire to cross it.

But what of arbitration? If it be voluntary, well and good: but voluntary arbitration has not met the case thus far, nor is there a well-grounded hope that it ever will. And if arbitration be compulsory, it is no whit better than lynch law. Meanwhile let the civil authorities attend to their business, and the gospel will surely do the rest. The Man on the well-curb is destined to be the final arbitrator. Nothing but the Golden Rule can bring in the Golden Age.

IV. Again, this man at the well was a sufferer, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." The lines of adversity were across his brow. He was familiar with the whips and scorns of time, the proud man's contumely, and all the ills that human flesh is heir to. He knew hunger and weariness. He could therefore be touched with a feeling of the infirmities of his fellow men.

The key-note of his earthly life was sympathy. I like to think of him as walking among the couches of the sick, of whom it is written, "He healed them every one." I recently visited one of our hospitals on dispensary day. A long line of patients was waiting to consult the physicians in attendance —men and women with sunken eyes and pale faces, the lame, the halt, the withered, mothers with wailing children in their arms. There were many obviously hopeless cases among them; but the Physician of Sychar knew no desperate cases: He asked no questions, and never said, "This serves you right." His word was kindness; his touch was power: "he healed them every one." And it is pleasant to read that in doing so, he "touched them." He touched the blind, the palsied, the leprous. This is the touch of nature's God that makes the whole world kin.

We have so organized our charities that we are in constant danger of neglecting this healing touch. We do good by proxy. We farm out our philanthropies. We rarely come into contact with pain and suffering as we ought to. Is the age of sympathy gone by? Let us by all means send our contributions to the associated forms of benevolence, but we cannot afford to miss what Cowper calls "the generous pleasure of a kindly deed." He who does not for himself stretch forth the helping hand, hears not the sweetest music of earth, the suppliant's "I thank you," nor fully knows the heavenly benediction, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

V. Once more, the Preacher of Sychar was a sinless man. At this point he would seem to part company with us, since he stood solitary and alone, the One sinless in a world of sinners. "For there is no difference, we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God." Or as Paul says, "All are concluded under sin"; that is, imprisoned in the same cell. But here is One who utters the challenge, "Who layeth anything to my charge?" And the centuries echo the words of one who sat in judgment upon him, "I find no fault in him at all."

Yet just here he enters more deeply into our fellowship than anywhere else; since he was, though innocent himself, by imputation, the bearer of the world's sin. He was—let us say it reverently—the sinner of all sinners; for, even as he sat there on the well-curb, his heart was bearing the awful burden which was destined to break it. "He that knew no sin was made sin for us."

In entering upon his work of redemption he exchanged places with us in our relations to the Moral Law; so that, he being wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, we might be healed by his stripes. So perfect was this vicarious transfer that he seemed to lose his very personality in ours. He exchanged self-consciousness with us; so that, passing under the shadow of the olive trees in Gethsemane, he entered into our experience of conviction of sin, drinking there the purple cup as if it were his very own; and so that in his stupendous passion on Calvary he went forth as our substitute into the outer darkness of exile from God. Wherefore there is a real truth, whether in the sense intended by our fathers or not, in the saying of the historic creed, "He descended into hell" for us.

It is, accordingly, as the great sin-bearer that he sits upon the well. And the sinners of the world pass by: sinners of high and low degree; some wearing crowns and others groaning under chains; the Samaritan woman with her unlawful husbands; thieves, murderers; all alike beating on their breasts and crying, "What shall we do?" He came to answer that cry. He heard it amid the glories of his heavenly home and "flew to our relief." He came to seek and to save the lost; to give himself a ransom for many. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

He came as the herald of salvation. A teacher? Yes; announcing in clearest terms all the great truths of the spiritual life. A philanthropist? Yes; having compassion on the multitude, and offering himself as a help to the poor and needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm and a shadow from the heat.

But, above all, a Savior from sin. No man has made the acquaintance of Christ who has not learned by heart the lesson of his atoning death; to-wit, that his blood cleanseth from sin.

His great message is that to the woman who came to draw water from Jacob's well: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Water! Water out of the wells of salvation! Water for all the famishing children of men! Water from the well beside the gate at Bethlehem! Water from "Siloa's brook that flows fast by the oracle of God!" Water of life!

It is recorded that when David was under siege at the Cave of Adullam he longed and said, "O that one would give me to drink of the water of the well beside the gate of Bethlehem!" And three of his mighty men, overhearing the homesick wish, brake through the host of the Philistines and brought him a cooling draught from the old well. So Christ, with love that passeth knowledge and courage invincible, broke through the opposing hosts of hell to bring the living water to famishing men.

The sermon at Sychar is over. The woman has gone to tell her townsmen of the wonderful man. His disciples have returned with food, saying, "Master, eat." He answers, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," adding, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." By this time the people of the city are streaming through the gates and coming this way to meet him. He speaks to his disciples: "Say not ye, There are yet four months and then cometh the harvest? Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest!" The multitudes are coming to hear the message. Thrust in your sickle and reap! Go preach! Give the people the water of life!

All this was long ago. He rose from the well-curb and went his way. In due time he passed through the heavens to reassume "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was." Yet, amid the splendors of heaven he remains the same—the same yesterday, today and forever. As he sat upon the well, so he sits upon his throne; his hands outstretched in overtures of mercy, his heart beating with sympathy for toiling, suffering, sinning men. He lifts his pierced hands: he speaks; and heaven and earth are full of his voice: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him that heareth say, Come! And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

We have prepared an advance order blank for books we will publish this fall. The use of it will save from 15c to 50c on single books, and if the entire list meets your approval you can save $3.25, or, more than 25%. We publish exclusively for preachers and only what will be of permanent value to them.

F. M. BARTON,
Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

A Cheerful Begging Letter.

Written by a Catholic attorney of Cleveland. It brought in several thousand dollars.

Cleveland, September 22, 1903.

FOR ST. ALEXIS.

TO THE DECENT POOR OF THE CITY.

The voluntary committee of beggars, in its inner circle, finely styled the Building Committee, since the completion of the Hospital, finds the Hospital in debt about $44,000. It was only $23,000 when we began to build, and hard sledding to meet current expenses for the new building. We raised over $30,000, and built in more than $50,000.

Will you now make us ashamed of you? We shall be if you, each of you, do not get your Five Dollars, Two Dollars, One Dollar or less, each of you to the hospital, before she comes. So that the committee of Beggars—will you remember we are your committee—may, when we receive her back onto her job, lay at her feet the bag of gold your gifts shall altogether make, saying to her: This will pay the debt, Sister—or, if we are to be only some ashamed: This will pay part of the debt.

This will give her, and all the other Sisters of her family a real rest. The generous rich, and the well-to-do, will understand there is nothing mean or exclusive about the poor.

You will all be very glad if they shall add their cheques of $5,000, or $10,000, or more, or less, as they shall see fit, to this purse to be laid before that little woman candidate for Sainthood for this holy object.

It will be a shame to this great and prosperous city—in these prosperous times—to let that lady come back to face her great work with that great load still against the darling enterprise of her blessed life work.

Besides if you do suffer it, she will go to St. Joseph again and that will be a shame to us that he should be bothered again for St. Alexis Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, when all around the world so many that are really bad off are at him all the time for help. Let us help ourselves once, and let her go to him with thanks, and light the candles on his altar.

Let us all stand together once for this good object and warm the hearts of all of us with one great big do!

Do it. Do it big! Altogether!

Sister Anselma will receipt.

L. A. RUSSELL.

"Little Stories," by S. Weir Mitchell, consists of a number of short stories or parables, holding queer questionings, albeit somewhat elusive, concerning some of the mysteries and puzzles of life. Occasionally a touch of sarcasm is evident, witness the following:

"A Sufi dervish, the father of sorrow and the son of grief, sat at night by the sea. The waves like sleek serpents writhed at his feet, and hissed forth, 'Come, let us strangle thee and thy griefs, and make an end.' 'Ah, welcome death!' he answered. Then a greater billow, rolling in, covered him, and went back, and the man was very wet. Thereupon he went home and dried his clothes."

"Little Stories," by S. Weir Mitchell; New York, Century Co.

CURRENT ANECDOTES

A paper furnishing illustrations and their morals for religious public speakers.

(Incorporating Cut Gems, Troy, N. Y.)

PUBLISHED BY

CURRENT ANECDOTES CO.

706-712 Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

SUBSCRIPTION: { In U. S., Canada and Mexico, $1.50 PER YEAR.

Foreign Subscriptions, 25c. extra, for postage.

[COPYRIGHTED 1904, BY F. M. BARTON.]

Entered at the Post Office at Cleveland, O., as second class matter.

Issued **JUNE, 1904** **Monthly**

IF—

I were going to preach a sermon on "Remember thy Creator," Eccl. 12:1, I would use for the climax this old story from the German:

At the creation it is said that the angel gave out the number of years that the created should live. To man was given thirty years, to the horse twenty years, to the dog twelve years, to the ape or monkey eight years. All seemed satisfied except man. He complained that thirty years was entirely too short to accomplish what he would have to do, and besides it was not so much longer than had been given to the horse.

The angel asked how many years he wished. He thought he should have the twenty years of the horse added to his thirty.

The angel agreed so easily that the man feared he had not asked enough. So he said that he thought he ought also to have the twelve years of the dog added.

The angel advised that he be satisfied with the fifty years he now had, but the man then thought that as he had dominion over the horse, the dog and the ape, that he should have the years of all of them added.

The angel agreed and thus man secured his seventy years, or three-score and ten.

The man was delighted to have driven so successful a bargain, but as he turned away, the angel said: "Let there be no misunderstanding. The thirty years you were given at first will be years of vigor and joy. But the twenty years you secured from the horse will be years of toil, when you will have to work like a horse, and the twelve years you secured from the dog, you will be kicked around like a dog, while the eight years of the ape you will spend sitting in the corner, drooling and grinning like the ape."

Just One of those Chances

To snap up a bargain in hymn books. Some 400 copies of "Calvary Selection for Social Worship," words only, paper covers, left in stock, to be sold out to first comer, by mail or telegraph, at $5.00 a hundred. Ordinary wholesale introduction price $10.00 a hundred. Just the thing for conventions, tent work, etc. Address at once.

THE CENTURY CO., New York City, N. Y.

ONLY A PAIR.

In his early practice Dr. D. B. St. John Roosa, the eminent New York specialist, one day received a letter from a man living in a remote part of Connecticut. The writer explained that he was afflicted with growing deafness, and that a summer visitor to the neighborhood had suggested his going to New York and consulting Doctor Roosa. After describing the symptoms the man ended by asking what was the probable nature of his trouble. Doctor Roosa suspected from the tone of the communication that the case was not for him, but he, of course, replied, advising the man to consult a local physician, and adding in answer to his direct inquiry, "From what you say I should presume that your difficulty arises from a diseased condition of the middle ear."

Two days later the doctor found this among his mail:

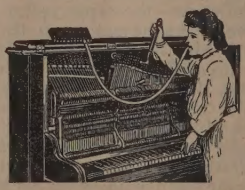
Dear Sir:—Yours received and contents noted. What do you take me for—a ring-streaked willipus-wallipus? You talk about my middle ear; how many ears do you think I've got—three? or five? My ears may be pretty long, and I guess they are, or I wouldn't be writing to no New York doctor for advice, but I'd have you to understand that I've got just two of them, and no more, like other folks, so there ain't no middle one. Don't get fresh!—Saturday Evening Post.

A CAREFULLY SELECTED LIST.

We often have orders amounting from $12 to $15 for selections of our books. But one came last week amounting to more than $40. We had not noticed that our list had grown to proportions that would total that amount. But we carefully select our books with a view to permanence of value in a preacher's library. As we publish for preachers almost exclusively, it does not pay us to add to our list that which will not generally commend itself to preachers. From this list we have selected a Preacher's Practical Library, allowing you to select 10 from a list of 19 of our best books, saving you $3.75 if you pay cash, and $1.25 if you wish to pay at the rate of $3.00 per month. Ask us for one of these cards, containing our list and the special offer.

F. M. BARTON, Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, O.

$3,000 a YEAR and INDEPENDENCE



We successfully teach the profession of Piano Tuning BY MAIL, by a new scientific method. The course includes action regulating voicing, fine repairing, etc., with personal attention to each student. We are the original teachers of Piano Tuning by mail, and inventors of the TUNE-A-PHONE, an instrument by which anyone who can hear can set the equal temperament. We have the indorsements of Ministers, Public School Superintendents, Piano Manufacturers, and hundreds of successful graduates. In these days of competition and uncertainty it is wise to fortify ones-self by learning a profession which can be turned into money any time or any place in the civilized world at an hour's notice. Write today for our illustrated prospectus, which is free and very interesting.

NILES BRYANT SCHOOL OF PIANO TUNING,

140 Music Hall. BATTLE CREEK, MICH.